Labour Monthly

EDITED BY R. PALME DUTT

NOTES OF THE MONTH

Urgent Alternatives

JOHN STRACHEY

Mr. Chamberlain's Anti-Americanism

other features include

SOCIALISM & THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

TRADE UNIONS & NATIONAL SERVICE

PALESTINE NOW

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Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Choice this May Day—The Two Alternatives—A Great Awakening—Still Incomplete—The Paradox of the Government and the Opposition—Chamberlain's Profitable Bankruptcy—Lessons of the Past—Collective Security in 1935*—The Lesson of Spain—The Lesson of Re-armament—The Lesson of Munich—New Illusions—Hosannas to Chamberlain—Swift Disillusionment—Appeals to Chamberlain—The "New Policy"—Refusal of Collective Security The "System of Guarantees"—Fishy Arguments—Rat-holes and the Rat—Munich in New Forms?—Britain and the Soviet Union—Urgent Alternatives*

April 15.

ON this May Day we are approaching the governing decisions for the whole future of the international situation. A stage has been reached in British policy, and consequently in the world relation of forces, in which it is universally recognised that final decisions have to be taken. The choice has become so clear that it can no longer be evaded. Either a firm, united collective system for the maintenance of peace as an indivisible whole against aggression from any quarter is now established, embracing in equal partnership Britain, France and the Soviet Union, together with the maximum possible co-operation of the United States, as its central pillars. If this is done, and done quickly, then even at this late stage the scales can still be turned for peace, and the further aggressions which are already planned will be checked. That is one alternative—the policy of peace. It is an alternative which, owing to the general awakening, is nearer to the possibility of realisation than ever before. *But it is not yet realised.* It is not yet the policy of Britain, as represented by its present Government. The decisive fight for peace has still to be fought.

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WHAT is the other alternative—the dominant reality we have still to face? The other alternative, represented by the present policy of the British Government, is that, amidst a desperate last-minute scramble of partial measures which afford no firm bulwark, but only deceive the peoples, provoke the enemy to hasten his attack and conceal the continuance of the old basic policy under new forms, the way is opened for the renewed thrust of fascism which is now being strategically prepared with frantic haste in order to anticipate any possible consolidation of the Peace Front. If this alternative wins, violent renewed aggressions and surrenders may be expected in the near future, leading to the ever-closer menace of general war. These are the urgent facts of the present situation. This is the urgent choice which now requires to be made by the people of this country. The answer to this choice, which governs the future of peace or war, depends on the fight against the "National" Government in Britain, which remains, through every twist and turn of its policy, the permanent enemy of collective security and the Peace Front.

A GREAT awakening has been in progress during the past few weeks, since Hitler's occupation of Prague and the Italian seizure of Albania. On all sides it is recognised that a collective stand must be made. This recognition comes, no longer only from the left, but in formal principle from practically every organ and expression of opinion in the country. There are no longer any open defenders of "non-intervention." There are no longer any open defenders of isolation. Where to-day are all the charges of "war-mongering" against the left, now that the same Government which made the charges has itself in form taken on the most apparently reckless commitments of warlike defence against aggression in this or that region? Where to-day are the solemn refusals of commitments for such a "far-away" country as Czechoslovakia, when the same Government has in form taken on the most apparently desperate commitments for the much further away and less easily defensible Poland—without any collective system? The real meaning of these "guarantees"

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we shall have presently to consider ; but they have knocked the stuffing out of all the old arguments against a collective system. At the same time from the main body of public opinion the common-sense demand for a joint stand, not merely with minor States, that is, under the most risky conditions, but with the powerful Soviet Union, for a joint pact of Britain, France and the Soviet Union as the obvious basis for maintaining peace, has been sounded with increasing intensity from the most varied quarters. All this is a measure of the real advance of the situation, of the great step forward in public opinion which is taking place, and of the powerful educative force of that schoolmaster more potent than any propaganda—hard facts.

BUT the awakening is not yet complete. It is not yet complete, because it lacks a political corollary ; and without a political corollary it is in danger, like the previous stages of awakening, of spending itself in the sand and ending in an outcome very different to what it has expected. In every respect except one the factors are more favourable than ever before for the speedy realisation of the Peace *Bloc* which can alone save peace. To the readiness of the Soviet Union, reaffirmed in Stalin's speech, is now added the increasing readiness and active approaches of the United States, together with the awakening of the main sections of public opinion in Britain and the United States. But one link in the chain is missing. One essential factor for the effective realisation of the Peace *Bloc* is missing—and that is the presence in Britain of a Government whose outlook in international politics corresponds to the outlook of President Roosevelt and the Soviet Government. One essential element in the general awakening is still lacking ; one decisive fact is not yet realised ; and this weakness is the heart of the danger of the present situation. The necessity of a collective stand for peace, the necessity of a joint stand of Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States, is now widely understood. *What is not yet generally understood is that the transformation of British policy to the completely new basis of collective security requires for its effective realisation a new Government*

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representative of all the labour and democratic forces which genuinely stand for collective security. If this change is not carried out, the menace of the present situation—despite all the awakening—is not less, but greater than before.

HERE we come to the singular paradox of the present political situation in Britain. Never before has any Government received such a shattering, overwhelming historical condemnation of its entire policy in the light of the present facts of the international situation as the Chamberlain Government—a condemnation it is helpless to deny. It is indeed amazing that any supporter of Munich, of the policy which has deliberately handed over Spain and the Western Mediterranean to the Axis, or of the policy which has handed over the equivalent of forty divisions, as well as 1,500 aeroplanes, the strongest armed defences in Central Europe and twenty-four arms factories to Hitler, should dare to show his face or open his mouth on a public platform to-day. Never before has the policy of an Opposition been so completely confirmed in the shortest space of time and adopted by the majority opinion of the whole country. Yet the normal sequel of such a process, the resignation of the Government and its replacement by the Opposition, with a consequent appeal to the verdict of the country, is lacking ; and it is lacking, not merely by the tenacity of the Government, but by the deliberate acquiescence of the Opposition. In place of driving home its advantage to rally the country and secure the defeat of a hated and reactionary Government and the victory of its own principles, the leadership of the Opposition has been engaged in disorganising the ranks of the opponents of the Government, while bolstering up the discredited Government and handing it out new blank cheques of confidence—on the basis of a policy which by no means represents a conversion to collective security, but is a caricature and sabotage of real collective security.

PROFITABLE bankruptcies are understood to be a speciality of experienced sharpers. Chamberlain has certainly known how to make his Munich bankruptcy profit-

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able. After a discrediting which would have ended the career of any Government in previous times, he has succeeded in emerging with a façade of strengthened "national unity" (that is, unity of the dominant party machines on top—though not representing the mass feeling in the country) which has enormously increased his power to press forward his reactionary policy. This improved position, at the very moment when there would have been the greatest possibility to secure his defeat, is due, not to his own strength, but to the division of the opposition forces and the criminal credulity of nine-tenths of official opposition expression to renew confidence in him on the first profession of a so-called "new policy." The expressions of "disillusionment" after the event in no wise remove the effect of these demonstrations of confidence and "national unity" at each critical turning point of policy.

IT is necessary to recall certain plain facts, in order to register that what we are here faced with is no isolated occurrence, but a process which is fast becoming a system of government, and grows more dangerous with each crisis; and second, to draw the necessary warning lessons for the present professions of a "change of heart," so servilely and docilely accepted by official left opinion, as if eight years of experience had taught nothing. In 1935 the Government proclaimed its undying fidelity to collective security. The Labour Party leadership (rejecting the Communist Party's warning to fight for the policy, but to distrust and expose the Government's professions) gave its official applause and endorsement to the Government. The Government thereupon called an election, and, on the basis of the Labour leaders' testimonials, won a smashing victory and defeated the Labour Party.

IN the bitter words of the Leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Attlee, speaking after the event, on October 7, 1936:

> The Government used our declaration in order to win the General Election. Then they betrayed us.—(C. R. Attlee, M.P., speech at Edinburgh on October 7, 1936, report in *Daily Herald*, October 8, 1936.)

Is this experience to be repeated in 1939? The outcome of

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the Government's " fidelity " to collective security is known. But on that basis, thanks to the Labour Party leadership (according to their own statement), the Government obtained its present majority by which it has been able to bring fascism to its present point of domination and menace to all peoples in Europe. It is amazing that any leader in the Labour Party responsible for this dares to show his face to-day—still more, to claim to direct policy, along the same lines, to an even greater catastrophe. Incidentally, what an illuminating self-revelation of the outlook of a Labour Party leadership which can complain that it has been " betrayed " by a Conservative Government! What an admission of *the " tacit alliance " of the Labour Party leadership and Chamberlain, which has been the real structure of government in this country for the past four years, and which bears the responsibility for all the present misfortunes.*

IT might have been thought that this experience of 1935 would have been sufficient to prevent its repetition. On the contrary. The process has continued to lower depths of degradation and paralysis of the Labour movement and betrayal of the interests of democracy and peace. In 1936 the Government adopted the policy of so-called " non-intervention " in relation to the German-Italian war of conquest on Spain—that is, not merely formal neutrality in the face of aggression on a democratic League State, but active intervention by the illegal arms blockade of Spanish democracy for the benefit of fascism. The Labour Party leadership immediately gave its support to the Government and angrily denounced the opponents of " non-intervention " in the Labour ranks. The outcome of this policy to-day is known. Had the Labour Party opposed the Government, fought " non-intervention " at the outset and secured its defeat, when it could have been defeated, the situation in Europe to-day would be very different. This guilt exceeds the guilt of 1935.

IN 1937 the Labour Party decided to support the Government's rearmament programme, on the grounds that the

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issue of rearmament could be separated from the issue of foreign policy, although it had previously defended its opposition on the grounds of opposition on policy. This conversion was unanimously hailed in the press as the realisation of "national unity" around the Chamberlain Government. And in practical effect it was equivalent to a vote of confidence in the policy of the Government, as the subsequent discussions revealed. Thus Sir Walter Citrine, defending this support at the Trades Union Congress the following year, rhetorically demanded whether any one imagined that the Chamberlain Government would use the armed power accorded it by Labour to compel Czechoslovakia to surrender to Germany. Within a few weeks of that speech the British Minister in Prague was presenting an ultimatum from Chamberlain to the Prague Government to surrender immediately to Hitler. Such were the fruits of this vote of confidence.

IN the spring of 1938 the Eden crisis and the conquest of Austria gave the first opportunity for a united "Peace Alliance" combination, combining Liberals, Labour, Co-operatives, Communists and the Conservative opposition elements, to rally the rising feeling in the country and turn out the Government. The Labour Party leadership banned any unity of the opposition and, by the General Council interview with Chamberlain on March 26, saved the Government. The outcome was the Runciman Plan for the destruction of the peace system in Europe. In the autumn of 1938 came the Munich crisis, with the Labour Party's "Godspeed" to Chamberlain, and Gallacher's voice as the sole voice of opposition. That unity was a height of betrayal exceeding all that had gone before. Its outcome is seen in the state of Europe to-day.

AND yet after all this experience we are seeing a renewal of this process in the still sharper crisis of to-day. Immediately after the speeches of Chamberlain at Birmingham on March 17 (the contents of which were analysed in last month's Notes, and which specifically excluded "new unspecified commitments," i.e., any general system of collective

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security) and of Halifax on March 20 (which consisted of a completely vague hypothetical statement that " if " aggression were to go on, then there would result a " much greater readiness " to " consider " the possibility of some form of " wider mutual obligations "), the hosannas from the left began. " Cabinet Returns to Collective Security," proclaimed the front page streamer of the *Daily Herald* on March 21, while with almost verbal identity the *News Chronicle* proclaimed on the same day : " Britain Returns to Collective Security." On April 1 (appropriate date) the front headlines of the *Daily Herald*, in full blast as usual as the Government's main propaganda organ, declared : " Peace Front : Decisive Stand by Britain. Wider Pact Soon to Include Soviet." All this brazen-faced propaganda for the Government was in direct contradiction to the facts (1) that the Government was expressly excluding any general system for collective security (" There is no question of any form of universalism or of general collective security," Diplomatic Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, April 5) and had turned down the Soviet proposals for the same ; (2) the Government was excluding the Soviet Union from its negotiations.

IN the debate in Parliament on April 3, Arthur Greenwood declared for the Labour Party :

> We have no reason to believe that that hope up to now has not been fulfilled. The seeds that the Prime Minister's statement contained might, if fostered and cultivated, bear rich fruit . . . . Should the Prime Minister succeed, he will wear the laurels of victory on his brow. The Opposition will not complain. We shall be proud that the policy for which we have consistently stood has borne fruit.

Thus full acceptance that the Government was carrying out the Labour policy of collective security. In the same debate another Labour M.P. acclaimed Chamberlain, amid cheers from the Government benches, as " the best man for the job." The feature of the debate, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, was the " striking and almost unanimous support accorded to the Government's change of policy." The *Times* noted " complete unanimity except for a voice here and there " ; " the House of Commons justified its debate, as

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Mr. Chamberlain hoped, with an unstinted demonstration of fundamental unanimity" ; the *Times* paid tribute to the Labour Party for this unity with Chamberlain, and rebuked the only discordant note from the Liberal benches in the shape of "misplaced" criticisms from Sinclair and the "outburst" of Lloyd George "who seems to inhabit an odd and remote world of his own" (*Times*, April 4). Once again the Labour-Chamberlain Alliance in full swing.

LATER, as the facts crept out, and criticism from the country sounded with increasing strength, the usual note of "disillusionment" followed. The *Manchester Guardian*, which had on March 18 acclaimed Chamberlain's speech ("it marks a decisive change in our national policy . . . . from it there can be no going back"), on April 11 announced its "dismay" that the Government appeared to be going back to its old policy. The *News Chronicle* of April 12 came out with an editorial entitled "Incredible," and reported that the latest signs of the Government's policy were "highly disturbing." The *Daily Herald* editorial of the same date complained that Labour had been let down by the Government :

> It was because of the assurance from the Prime Minister that such leadership was now being given that criticism of the Government was not pressed in the debate before the Easter recess. . . . . But at the same time there are disquieting rumours about the attitude of the Government. What has the Government done to implement the policy of collective security ? So far as can be discovered, very little.

This was within three weeks of the confident headlines : "Cabinet Returns to Collective Security." What kind of leadership is this of an opposition fight, which in every alternate moment is abandoning the fight and proclaiming confidence, and then in the next moment, when facts prove the falsity of the baseless assumptions, complains that it has been deceived ? It is obvious that this is a system of disorganisation of the fight—the political counterpart of the same process which is engaged in expelling and purging the most active opponents of the Government.

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THE facts of the continued exclusion of any approach to the Soviet Union during the critical moves of these weeks, the complacency over the Italian conquest of Albania, the renewed interchanges with Italy and continued acceptance of the Anglo-Italian Agreement, were all too glaring to be ignored. The note of criticism had to be sounded. In the parliamentary debate on April 13, after all the eulogies of April 3, the policy of the Government was mildly declared to be " disappointing " in the Labour view. Yet even as late as April 13 the *Daily Herald* was still proclaiming the Government's policy with full support, the only difficulty noted being that " Russia Doubts Our Intentions " and that " the Soviet view " (observe : " the Soviet view," *not* the Labour view) distrusts Chamberlain. Even in the debate on April 13 Dalton, after expressing pertinent criticisms on the policy in relation to the Soviet Union, concluded by appealing to Chamberlain to " get on with the job." In place of the appeal to the democratic forces to unite to defeat Chamberlain and enforce a policy of collective security—the appeal to Chamberlain.

DO the facts justify this confidence in Chamberlain ? Has the Chamberlain Government become converted to collective security ? Is the rôle for the Opposition now one of loyal support, combined with mild criticism ? On the contrary. Such a conception not only reveals a complete blindness to the whole character of the reactionary class forces which are organised in the Chamberlain Government and which are basically pro-fascist, anti-soviet and anti-democratic. It also reveals a complete ignoring, a wishful-thinking blindness, to the plain realities of the Government's " new policy " as it has so far developed. For that " new policy " is by no means a system of collective security. It is, on the contrary, an attempted alternative to a system of collective security, and it contains the most menacing alternative possibilities. It is indeed surprising that those who have had experience of Munich should not have chosen to look below the surface of the Government's new system. For the more these realities are examined, the more it is evident that,

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if a new Munich is to be prevented, the moment is one, not for weakening the fight, but for intensifying the fight in order to secure the real victory of collective security.

WHAT has the experience of these past weeks shown? On March 15 Hitler annexed Czechoslovakia. The British-French guarantees of the new Czechoslovakia were shown to be worthless paper. The annexation of Czechoslovakia was in fact the direct sequel and working out of Munich. But the illusions generated around Munich were thereby torn up. They were torn up, not by Chamberlain, but by Hitler. The first reaction of Chamberlain, in his revealing speech of March 15, showed that he was not taken by surprise (the impending coup was well known beforehand) and that he had at first no intention of changing his policy: "let us not be deflected from our course." Only the general revolt, including in the Conservative Party, compelled a change of tone in his Birmingham speech on March 17 to make a show of resistance. But he was careful to exclude specifically any system of collective security ("not prepared to engage this country by new unspecified commitments"). On March 18 the Soviet Government urgently proposed an immediate Six Power Conference to concert measures to prevent the impending new strokes of fascist aggression. The British Government rejected this as "premature." The immediate consequence was the seizure of Memel, the imposition of the Trade Treaty on Rumania and the Italian annexation of Albania. The latter was a direct violation of the Anglo-Italian Agreement. The British Government replied, not by declaring the end of the Agreement, but by reaffirming the Anglo-Italian Agreement and quoting new promises of Mussolini with regard to Spain. Meanwhile, separate negotiations were undertaken with Poland and Rumania; no attempt was made to approach the Soviet Union, and evasive replies were given to every question on such an approach. All these initial steps were already sufficient indication of the real outlook of the Chamberlain Cabinet, at the same time as the wildest illusions of "collective security" as already adopted were being spread in the official press of the left.

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ON March 31 and April 13 the Government came out with its alternative policy to a system of collective security—the system of limited guarantees to Poland, Rumania and Greece. This was the grand substitute for a real peace system of the major Powers, Britain, France and the Soviet Union, together with the United States and all other States willing to participate, in order to maintain indivisible peace against all aggression. What is this system of guarantees worth ? The comment of the man in the street was immediate. If there is a serious desire to build a combination of forces capable of checking fascism, why fix only on these few little States which are extremely weak and ignore the one overwhelmingly powerful State which could build a real bulwark ? What new madness is this ? Is this a demonstration of the well-known prudent conservative "halfway" method, avoiding extremes, neither collective security, nor isolation, but a few commitments with the minimum forces and the maximum danger ? Or a chivalrous consideration not to build too overwhelming a combination against fascism, but secure a more even balance, likely to make war more certain ? For years the world has been waiting for Britain to come out of isolation and take the lead in building an alliance to check fascism. Now that the plunge has been taken, was this little batch the best that Chamberlain could bring home ? For years the Government has sworn that it could not dare to risk any commitment with the most overwhelming superior forces on its side. Now in the most pot-valiant spirit it appears to take on without a thought one miscellaneous commitment after another, a new one each week, with wholly inadequate forces and in the most difficult directions. Taken at face value, the plan did not make sense. It was difficult for the most benevolent observer not to feel that it bore a distinctly fishy flavour.

THE voluminous and contradictory explanations of the exclusion of the Soviet Union during these initial negotiations, and of the rejection of the Soviet common sense proposals, heightened the fishiness of the atmosphere. It was solemnly explained that nothing could be done with the

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Soviet Union, since Poland and Rumania would not like it. The attribution of the responsibility to Colonel Beck bore too much of a family resemblance to the attribution of the responsibility for "non-intervention" to Blum. It is well-known that the unwilling hand of British diplomacy is always forced by the other man when some anti-Soviet or anti-democratic act has to be performed. That there could be any anti-Soviet elements in the British Cabinet is clearly unthinkable. The innocent were, however, puzzled to learn that British foreign policy is dictated by Poland and Rumania. If the inclusion of the Soviet Union were recognised as essential, what was to prevent a simple intimation to Poland and Rumania that the guarantee could only be given conditional on the inclusion of the Soviet Union? Alternatively, what was to prevent parallel negotiations with the Soviet Union for an Anglo-Soviet Pact? Yet in the first weeks no negotiations or even consultations with the Soviet Union were attempted. Only under the most overwhelming pressure of the general outcry that this aroused have negotiations been begun at the time of writing, and even so on a limited basis.

IF the system of limited guarantees were to be treated as serious, and seriously intended to be upheld, it would mean that they constitute a direct invitation to fascist aggression to proceed elsewhere. *The very limitation emphasises the refusal of security in other directions.* Those other directions are in consequence more menaced than before the guarantees. Thus, for example, to guarantee Greece and refuse Jugoslavia is equivalent to inviting the attack on Jugoslavia, for which the seizure of Albania has already prepared the way. In general, this would then constitute, not a change of policy, but a continuance in new forms of the old policy of endeavouring to canalise fascist aggression on the directions approved by Britain. Britain stops up certain rat-holes in order to make sure that the rat will break out in other directions. This would harmonise with the anti-Soviet aim and make relative sense of the apparently mad plan on such a basis. For it would certainly not be inconceivable, given a slight change of conditions, to turn a limited guarantee system, excluding

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the Soviet Union, into an anti-Soviet bloc, and even finally to invent the pretext to work the famous "guarantees" the other way round. We should by no means put it past the conscious anti-Soviet elements to have some such considerations in their mind.

BUT can the guarantees be treated as serious? The answer to this question depends on the outcome of the negotiations with the Soviet Union. If an understanding is not reached with the Soviet Union, it is not possible to treat the guarantees as serious. The heavy limitations of the conditions of fulfilling them, independently of the Soviet Union, indicate this. After the experience of Czechoslovakia, an Anglo-French guarantee in Central or Eastern Europe does not rank very high. But the guarantee method has already been used, as with Czechoslovakia, to intervene in the affairs of the "protected" State and enforce concessions to fascism as the price of further protection. The prediction of the *Times* that the guarantee to Poland is not intended to imply the maintenance of the integrity of Poland, but opens the way to negotiations for Poland to cede the German demands, may prove to be as justified as the previous inspired predictions of the *Times*; and the indignant official denials may prove to have precisely as much foundation as the previous indignant official denials. Such a line would also fit in with the aims of the anti-Soviet pro-fascist forces, who have certainly not mysteriously disappeared from the British Cabinet.

THE negotiations with the Soviet Union are in progress at the time of writing, and no official indications are yet available of their character. But it would appear that the proposals from the British side bear no relation to any Mutual Guarantee Pact, corresponding to the Franco-Soviet Pact, which would alone provide a firm basis for the advance to a system of real collective security.

> There can of course be no question of an Anglo-Russian Pact on the model of the Anglo-Polish Pact. . . . . At the same time it is of the utmost importance that the Polish and Rumanian rear be secured and that both Powers be able to obtain supplies from Russia. . . . . What is considered desirable is an arrangement

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> that would represent something halfway between the present Anglo-Russian relationship and a downright alliance.—(Diplomatic Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, April 15.)

Thus, if this voice of the Foreign Office is correct, the British aim is to find means of involving the Soviet Union without offering any guarantees to the Soviet Union. But the opposition to the Anglo-Soviet Pact remains the fixed point—the "of course" of the whole official viewpoint. In the face of the general awakening of opinion, and the obvious menace and urgency of the whole situation, the opportunity to press forward the fight for the Anglo-Soviet Pact is now greater than ever before. But victory in this fight can only be secured on the basis of the most determined and intensified fight of the united democratic forces against the whole policy of the Chamberlain Government. And, indeed, the experience of the Franco-Soviet Pact has shown that, even where a Pact has been enforced, no confidence can be placed in any reactionary Government to carry it out, but the task still remains to replace the reactionary Government by a Government representing the popular forces which can alone be of a character to carry out a policy of collective security.

ALL these considerations show that, so far from there being any basis for illusory confidence in the Chamberlain Government or its "new policy," the fight against the Chamberlain Government needs now to be carried forward more urgently than at any previous time. The basic decisions of policy for the whole future are now in process of being hammered out. In the present rapid and accelerating changes of the entire international situation, which are throwing every issue into the melting pot and opening up anew the basic issues of policy for the entire people, the most far-reaching possibilities open out in either direction. The practical opportunities are increasing for the realisation of that Peace Pact of Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States, which can alone save peace. *But the dangers of sudden moves from the side of fascism, before collective peace is realised, while it is still being sabotaged by Chamberlain, are increasing no less rapidly.* Hence the urgency for the active fight and unity of the peace forces in Britain to defeat the

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policy of Chamberlain and secure rapidly the victory of a real policy of collective peace. Herein lies the critical importance and responsibility of the coming Labour Party Conference at the end of this month. The tacit alliance of Chamberlain and the Labour Party leadership must be broken ; the responsibility of leadership for the victory of the World Peace Front must be undertaken. This is the task of the Whitsun Conference of the Labour Party. The question of Cripps and the expulsions, the questions of the Peace Front in Britain, is only the counterpart of this basic task. To these questions of the Whitsun Labour Conference, whose decisions will have a governing responsibility in the whole present international situation, it will be necessary to return next month.

R. P. D.

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May Day 1939

BY JOHN A. MAHON

THIS YEAR MARKS the 50th anniversary of the decision of the international congress in 1889 to set apart one day in the year for the demonstration of the solidarity of the international working class. Never was there more need for that solidarity than now, and never was it nearer realisation.

During these fifty years the working class has advanced with a sweep and speed unparalleled in the history of the classes. Compare the picture of the Labour Movement in 1889 and at the present time.

Then—loosely connected trade unions and some socialist parties, confined in the main to western and central Europe and to North America. Now—million strong mass organisations, industrial, political, co-operative, cultural, firmly based in the minds of the working class in every important capitalist country.

Then—a labour movement concerned in the main with trade union and parliamentary activity, lacking a unified conception of the struggle for power and the way forward, a socialism very largely a mixture of various utopian trends. Now—a world-wide organisation, the Communist International spreading Marxist-Leninist science among millions of members, readers and supporters, the theory of socialism carried forward in the practice of the U.S.S.R. into new heights.

Then—capitalism sweeping forward to open new continents to its exploitation, contemptuous alike of the mutterings at home and the feeble protests of feudal rulers in colonial areas. Now—the greatest individual power is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, greatest in extent of territory, richness of natural wealth, population and military might, while national consciousness is being realised in India and China, the latter of which is building an army which will play a decisive rôle in the defeat of imperialism.

Truly the working class is striding through the pages of history with seven-leagued boots.

Recall to mind the membership figures of some of our organisations.

Membership of the:

British Trade unions—5,851,000, an increase in the last two years of 1,000,000; French Trade unions—5,000,000, an increase in the last three years of 4,000,000; United States of America Trade unions—7,400,000, an increase in the last three years of 4,000,000; Mexican Trade Unions—800,000; Cuban Trade Unions—400,000; Phillipine Trade Unions—350,000; Indian Trade Unions—300,000.

The affiliated members of the International Trade Union Federation

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is now 20,000,000. The Soviet Trade Unions have 22,000,000. In addition there are unaffiliated unions in other countries, bringing the total number of trade unionists in the world to 50,000,000.

The Communist International has a total membership of 3,000,000 organised in 57 national parties (1,200,000 in capitalist countries), and is supported by the Young Communist League with 2,000,000 members.

Recent elections show that around this organised core in the trade unions and political parties there is gathering an ever-increasing sympathy and desire for radical social improvement.

We can register this May Day, 1939 that the forces of the organised working class are greater than ever, and that it has strongly organised allies in the national independence movements and in the peasantry.

We can also register the fact that this growth is continuing and is accelerating as the struggle grows sharper. That is but natural since the consciousness and organisation of the exploited is synonymous with struggle against the exploiters.

It is against this rising tide that the exploiting class is employing its new weapon, Fascism. The Fascist offensive is in full swing, it has struck down Spain and it now seeks the vantage positions from which to strike down the peoples of France and Britain. But the working class is increasingly aware of the danger, and the rapid growth of the mass organisations is one of the signs that it is preparing for the decisive battle, for the struggle which will end in the deathblow to Fascism.

Through organisation, millions upon millions of people are declaring their desire to defeat Fascism and to advance into the new world, the contours of which can be seen in the U.S.S.R.

But desire is not enough, it is unity of action that is needed. Here is the central problem which May Day demands we should solve. For fifty years we have spoken of unity, the time has come to realise it.

We of the British Labour Movement have a central responsibility to realise unity rapidly, for it depends upon British Labour whether the international split continues or whether the Communist International and the L.S.I., the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Soviet Trade Unions, are to be united into an irresistible force.

That once again in London there will be two May Day demonstrations, one on May 1, and one on Sunday, May 7, must bring the thought into all our minds—what is the next step in Britain to achieve unity? What can we do now to change the relation of forces in the Labour Movement so that the opposition to unity at Transport House can no longer keep the ranks divided?

The history of our movement supplies the answer. It is in activity and struggle that the movement grows and that unity is built. The trade unions did not grow out of a plan or an order from on top, they grew out of the struggle of the working class against the employers,

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the struggle for the immediate needs of men and women in their daily life, a struggle which is both economic and political.

Engels in his comments on the first May Day demonstration made very clearly the point that the workers of the world were fighting " for the first time as One Army, under One Flag and fighting for One immediate aim." It was because they were all fighting together, presenting their demand for the eight-hour day to all the governments and employers simultaneously, that they had become " One Army under One Flag."

Now it is a life and death question for us to realise working class unity and the people's front in Britain. Ought we not this May Day to take more vigorous measures to make clear that united front and popular front are the way forward for every worker—the way to revive trade unionism to a fighting force on wages and hours, the way to organise the million masses of unorganised, the way to keep millions of pounds in the pockets of the tenants and out of the pockets of the landlords, the way to bring down prices of food, clothes and fares ? All the streams of struggle, if led by politically conscious revolutionary workers, can swell up into the mighty tide which, uniting with the rising indignation over the government's foreign policy, can sweep Chamberlain away.

The spirit of May Day is militant class struggle. When we remember how for decades the whole political atmosphere of our Labour Movement has been poisoned by social-democracy, should we not be on guard lest this poison vitiate the whole conception of united front and people's front ? The propaganda of Transport House describes the popular front in terms of electoral combinations. Electoral combinations are a vital and necessary part of the struggle against Chamberlain, but they are only an aspect of the united front and the people's front, the essence of which is the *unity in action* of the people in the factories, in tenants' defence, in defence of the unemployed, in building the Labour Movement, in the electoral campaign and at the polls.

In going to Downing Street with its letter and a mass demonstration in support of the immediate demands of the workers and the people—wages, hours, rents, unemployment, A.R.P., prices, fares, civil rights, anti-fascism,—the London First of May Committee will this year give a renewed direction to the May Day ideas, the direction of building the united front and people's front in action from below at the same time as the efforts to secure political agreement at the top are supported by mass pressure as never before.

Ten thousand East London tenants are fighting the landlords, the municipal tenants of Birmingham vote overwhelmingly for rent strike, 10,000 Siemens workers come out on strike for the reinstatement of their shop stewards' secretary. The workers are increasingly inclined to " have a go " whenever they see a chance of getting some results. Let us so work that every partial action becomes a new formation for the united front and the people's front.

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Mr. Chamberlain's Anti-Americanism

BY JOHN STRACHEY

[*This article was written before the Roosevelt Peace Note of April 15. The publication of this Peace Note—whose text is given on page 314—underlines the importance of the issues raised.*]

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to exaggerate the effects of the recent and repeated declarations on the part of the American government of its support for all efforts to resist Fascist aggression.

Mr. Roosevelt and other spokesmen of the administration have gone very far indeed—far further than most observers expected—in these declarations. And as I write (April 12) these declarations have culminated in Mr. Roosevelt's statement at his press conference, quoting the now famous editorial in the *Washington Post*, which carried an extremely strong implication that the United States would actually take part, on the side of the democracies, and sooner rather than later, if it came to war. This followed the sensational evidence, given by Mr. Stimson before the Senatorial hearings on the Neutrality Act, in which this Republican ex-Secretary of State is reported to have said that the United States should, in his opinion, engage in a war on the side of the democracies if the Soviet Union was engaged in such a war, but not unless.

When the declarations of the administration and these supporting statements from Republican sources are contrasted with the equivocations and appeasements of Mr. Chamberlain, every observer must be struck with the extraordinary fact that, though American interests are incomparably less menaced than are those of Britain, the American reaction to that menace is ten times as strong. The failure of British Imperialism to react to the Nazi menace, even when the knife is visible at its throat, has been exhaustively explained in this journal, in the Notes of the Month, and elsewhere. What is in need of explanation is the strength and relative unanimity of the American reaction to the menace of Nazi imperialism which, though it is very real, is after all still three thousand miles further away from America. It is true, of course, that the South American markets and the Far Eastern markets of America are alike menaced by the Axis Powers. It is true that the extreme aggression of these powers must ultimately clash with the interests of American imperialism all over the world. It is equally true that the American community as a whole has a far more lively and real democratic sense than has Britain. And yet the relative freedom of

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America from the spirit of Munichism does need further explanation and examination.

The influences which have enabled Mr. Roosevelt, in the face of the profound isolationist tradition of America, and the very strong pacifist sentiments of a great part of just those liberal forces which, in internal affairs, have been Mr. Roosevelt's main support, to go as far as he has gone in his anti-fascist foreign policy are exceedingly complex. Let us take the case of the above two voices raised from the side of the Republican party in favour of this policy. The *Washington Post*, whose editorial Mr. Roosevelt used, is owned by Mr. Eugene Mayer, who was Governor of the Federal Reserve Board under Mr. Hoover. Mr. Mayer is himself a biggish American capitalist. He is Jewish, but that in itself would, as many lamentable instances show, be no reason why he should necessarily take up an anti-fascist stand. Again, Mr. Stimson speaks for the most old-fashioned conservative wing of the Republican Party, and the vast capitalist interests which that party represents. How is it that the influence of such figures as these is cast, in America, into the anti-fascist scale, while their opposite numbers in this country are found to be the most active supportors of a policy of capitulation to Fascism ?

It may be suggested that one answer, at any rate, is that these great American capitalist interests have to favour resistance to the Nazi drive, just because of the strenuous efforts of their British equivalents to collaborate with, or, in practice, to capitulate to, that drive. Is not one of the reasons that the Mayers and the Stimsons, who are bitter opponents of Mr. Roosevelt's whole domestic policy, are found to be supporting him on this foreign issue, that they see clearly the world wide significance of such moves as the Düsseldorf Agreement between the spokesmen of the Federation of British Industries and the Reichsgruppe Industrie ? On March 16, the day after the occupation of Prague, these two bodies signed their agreement, in Düsseldorf. We have not yet any full copy of the text of this agreement, but it is said to provide for such measure as the following : " . . . . the joint pushing of British and German goods in export markets and for the negotiations of arrangements by individual industries for fixing selling prices, and presumably selling quotas, in these markets. Other countries would be invited to participate in such agreements, but in the event of their refusal, British Government help would be sought to restrain them from entering into competition with the British and German industries.

" The British and German electrical industries, for example, might agree upon a price and quota plan for the particular market, and if, say, the Swiss electrical manufacturers attempted to undercut them, the British Government would be asked to apply some unspecified form of sanctions against Switzerland . . . " (*News Chronicle.*)

No doubt the agreement would affect the Swiss manufacturers in this way. But it is not against little Switzerland that the agreement is

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" pointed," to use one of the phrases of diplomacy. Its point is directed straight at the heart of America. The agreement, if it is ratified, will be nothing short of a joint Anglo-German declaration of economic war upon the United States. It would mean that British and German capitalism, inextricably interlocked and supported by their respective governments, were to make a joint drive in South America and Asia, and over the rest of the world, a drive, the real effects of which would be to attempt to oust American capital from these markets. Do we not here find ample justification for American capitalist support for Roosevelt's strong foreign policy ? Do we not here find peeping out in a new form the underlying world-wide rivalry between British and American capital, a basic fact of the world situation which is so often obscured and so often forgotten ?

Do we not often tend to think that the Chamberlain policy of capitulatory collaboration with Germany is exclusively directed against the Soviet Union ? No doubt, from a military point of view, the point of such a British-German alliance would be directed against the Soviet Union. But the economic point would, I repeat, be directed rather against the United States. The truth is that the ultra-reactionary forces in Britain, which Mr. Chamberlain represents, are at heart almost as anti-American as they are anti-Soviet. The policy of the Düsseldorf Agreement, if it is carried out, will lead to the immediate estrangement of this country, not only from the Soviet Union, but also from the great Western capitalist democracy, America. It would leave Britain a junior partner in the Fascist Axis, clearly and irrevocably aligned against the two greatest powers on earth, the Soviet Union and America.

There is no need to emphasise the horrible betrayal of the security of the British people which the Düsseldorf policy amounts to, even if (and what an if !) Britain could by capitulatory collaboration enter the Fascist Axis as a junior partner. Far from meaning a new epoch of peace and appeasement as the cabinet prophesies, such a development would usher in a new period of incomparably greater world tension. This time the conflict would have been raised from a European to a world scale. The Soviet Union and America would be driven together in elementary self-defence and self-protection. The British people would be led, as a junior partner of Germany, into an assault on the one socialist community, and the one democratic capitalist community remaining in the world.

The American Government and the great American capitalists are, of course, informed as to the real trend of British foreign policy. They have by now no illusions; they know that Mr. Chamberlain is determined, if he can, to swing Britain into the Axis. But they are showing a commendable determination to prevent this manœuvre by every means in their power. The strengthening of democratic opinion in Britain, which can alone force Chamberlain out of capitulary collabora-

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tion with the Fascists (this is his real policy; the over-worked word "appeasement" does not really cover the reality at all adequately) becomes a chief object of American policy.

The position of that section of American capitalism, concentrated on the Eastern coast, and typified by the house of Morgan, must be becoming very difficult. This section of American capitalist opinion has long been extremely pro-British. Morgan is in some respects an international Anglo-American house. But pro-British in this sense has hitherto meant pro-Chamberlain. As recently as last November, the partners in the house of Morgan were strongly pro-Munich in their attitude. They were talking in terms of the wisdom of surrendering all Eastern Europe to Germany as her special sphere of influence. They did not seem to have grasped at all the real bearing of Mr. Chamberlain's policy. They did not see that that policy must, in the nature of things, develop into a joint Anglo-German drive against America. It is to be supposed, however, that even this body of American opinion must be beginning to feel that Chamberlain is going rather far. They no doubt remain pro-British, but there may well be a prospect of swinging them into a partial support of Mr. Roosevelt's foreign policy, on the grounds that Mr. Chamberlain's policy must end in capitulation to, rather than collaboration with, Germany, and that America simply cannot afford to see Britain, with all her resources, turned into a German vassal.

It would, of course, be to give a wholly one-sided picture of the American scene to suggest that all forces are now lined up behind Mr. Roosevelt's strongly anti-Fascist foreign policy. The overwhelming majority of the American people are bitterly and ever-increasingly anti-Fascist. Important American capitalist interests support, for the reasons which I have attempted to explain above, this policy. But that does not mean that there are not very formidable forces in America which oppose this policy in the name of the great isolationist American tradition. These forces are concentrated above all in Congress. Moreover, they are by no means confined to the reactionary Republican Party. Some of the most progressive senators and congressmen, who have supported the New Deal actively, are seriously imbued with the isolationist, semi-pacifist tradition. Disastrous illusions, crippling parochialism, prevents these American progressives from seeing that their fate is bound up at a hundred points with the democracy of Europe and the world-wide anti-Fascist struggle. These blind progressives play into the hands of those reactionaries whose class instincts are so strong that, even at the cost of betraying the interests of American capital, they oppose any anti-Fascist line. These forces, though they are much weaker in America than they are in Britain, vociferously exist. They range from Republican congressmen and senators, who, on narrow political calculations, believe that they can damage Roosevelt and his chance of re-election, or the re-election of any progressive Democrat,

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by playing on the American peoples' love of isolation and fear of war, to outright Fascists, such as Father Coghlan and his forces, who are simply Fascist agents and allies on the American continent.

It is just here that the vileness of Mr. Chamberlain's foreign policy again and again brings sustenance and reinforcement to these otherwise flagging pro-Fascist forces in America. What powerful arguments are not put into the mouths of those spokesmen who, whether conciously or unconsciously, are playing the Fascist game in America, by the ever repeated betrayals of democracy of which the British Government is guilty ? How easy it is for a quite sincere American progressive to be deceived and impressed by the argument that, after all, there is not a pin to choose in reactionariness between the British and German Governments: that all talk of supporting Britain against the Fascist aggression is nonsense: that what is brewing in Europe is just an inter-imperialist struggle of the old kind, in which the American people is to be asked once more to fish the British chestnuts out of the fire, etc.

Such arguments, of course, overlook the obvious fact that the reactionary forces in Britain are not conducting a struggle against Germany, but are desperately struggling to achieve a collaboration with Germany, even at the cost of capitulation. But it needs a fairly high degree of political consciousness to realise this fact, and whole sections of American opinion can be, and are being, deceived by the spokesmen of Fascism, using the all too true evidence of the ultra-reactionary character of the British Government. It is here that the inter-dependence of the progressive forces in this country and in America becomes most obvious. The replacement of Mr. Chamberlain by any British Government which would undertake an unequivocal anti-Fascist policy would have immense repercussions in America. It would vastly strengthen Mr. Roosevelt's hands. It would go far to silence the pro-Fascists and their more or less unconscious allies amongst the liberal isolationists. We must never forget that Mr. Roosevelt is engaged in his foreign policy, as in his home policy, in a severe and often desperate struggle against forces which are just about as strong as his own. As I write, Mr. Chamberlain's attempted return to appeasement, after the Italian invasion of Albania, is in full force. One can imagine the colossal damage which this new failure of Britain to react to a new aggression is doing in America.

The reckless sabotage of the interests and safety of the British people involved in the Chamberlain policy is obvious enough in the case of the boycott of the Soviet Union as a potential ally. It is less obvious, more complex, but no less important, in the case of America. Whatever may be the immediate future of America, there is no doubt that she, together with the Soviet Union, will be one of the two dominant powers of the twentieth century. Compared to her even Germany is a minor power. Yet Mr. Chamberlain and the dominant section of British governing class opinion, always fiercely anti-American at heart, is

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perfectly willing to drive Britain on a road which must throw her into conflict, not only with the Soviet Union, but with America also. It is our duty to convince the British people that capitulatory collaboration with Germany is alienating, and must increasingly alienate, not one, but both of the two supreme world powers of the twentieth century. For the result of such a policy, even if it could be carried through without total capitulation to Germany, would be to drive us, as a junior partner of Germany—as a semi-vassal, semi-Fascist state—into hopeless conflict with the Soviet Union and America, in alliance, against us.

The whole history of the relationship between Great Britain and America since the middle of the eighteenth century has been one long and tragic story of the hatred of the rulers of Britain for America. Sometimes, as in the case of the War of Independence, and the war of 1812, our ruling class has driven us into armed conflict with America. Sometimes, as in the case of the acute crisis during the Civil War, British democratic opinion has been just strong enough to prevent a conflict. Once again there has arisen this historic conflict between the interest and impulse of the British people, which is for the closest possible collaboration with the American people, and the interest and impulse of the British ruling class, which is for conflict with the American people.

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Socialism and the People's Front

BY COUNCILLOR J. SILVERMAN
(PROSPECTIVE LABOUR CANDIDATE FOR ERDINGTON)

THE STRUGGLE FOR unity and the People's Front is being represented by the National Executive of the Labour Party as a struggle by those who want to sacrifice the independence of the Party and abandon its socialism. This contention is hollow and not even sincere, and yet we must recognise that on this ground the Executive receive the support of a good many militant and left wing socialists whose lack of political clarity enables them to swallow this argument.

So let me say in the first place that what is required first and foremost in the Labour Party to-day is more, and not less, socialism, and above all a socialist outlook and understanding by our leaders themselves. But this is something quite different from paying mere lip service,—which, by the by, is more than most of our propagandists do—and more than having an "immediate" programme in cold storage, to be put into operation at some remote and unascertainable date. I mean an understanding from the scientific socialist point of view of the nature of present day capitalist society, an assessment of the social forces in this country and in the world to-day, an appreciation not only of the nature of fascism but also of the rôle of Chamberlain as the representative of big business, pro-fascism and reaction in this country. And above that our leaders should have the real desire to change the system.

Now changing a system is something far more than having a programme, even should we get the opportunity of a Labour Government which will try to put that programme into operation. I do not decry Labour's Immediate Programme. I believe that if its proposals were achieved we should have travelled a long way towards weakening capitalism and establishing a base for socialism in this country. But stating a programme and achieving a programme are not the same thing.

If we understand the class nature of society, we can see that we are engaged in a life and death struggle with the forces of capitalism. In such a struggle we can rarely do things as per programme. Most of our leaders and many of our rank-and-file rashly assume that we shall be able to deliver our socialism by instalments as per programme and fail to understand that at every step in the struggle we shall encounter bitter opposition and all sorts of sabotage. This has been dimly perceived by our Labour leaders in consequence of our 1931 experiences,

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and it is now proposed to bring the banks under public control. But the banks will not exhaust the capacity of the ruling classes for sabotage.

Now the struggle for socialism does not begin with the achievement of a Labour Government. It must begin right now, and its main feature must be the mobilisation of every resource to oust the present pro-fascist government. It is an unfortunate fact that the elector is not very much concerned with what is going to happen " when " Labour gets in. He is concerned with immediate problems, and promises contained in a programme appear to him too much like something " in the sweet by and by." If you want to enlist his support you have to engage him in the current struggle.

Now as socialists we ought to understand the threat to democracy in this country and throughout the world from our present pro-fascist government. Within the framework of this democracy we hope to work for and establish socialism. But if democracy goes, not only we, but our comrades in Europe, can say good-bye to socialism for a very long time. The immediate struggle ought, therefore, to be to shift this reactionary government at the earliest possible moment. In this we can rally the assistance of other democratic forces which, whilst not socialist, at least value the liberty and democracy which fascism threatens to destroy.

What is the Labour Party approach ? It is based, we are told, upon the hope that we will gradually convert the majority of the people to socialism and then get a Labour Government to bring socialism about.

Now, to a propagandist, such an idea is fantastic. Within the framework of capitalism, with capitalist press and education it is impossible for the vast majority of the people to understand what socialism is. In fact we must divide our propaganda roughly into two different classes, socialist education to train the intelligent and socialist vanguard in the meaning and methods of scientific socialism, and propaganda to enlist the support of the majority upon the immediate line. The creation of an effective election machine is a secondary matter which must depend in the long run on the way the Party discharges these two functions.

As a matter of fact, there is little, if any, socialism in Labour Party propaganda. Municipal elections are conducted on hand to mouth issues. Even such questions as Direct Labour are generally avoided like the plague. Its main publications, such as *Your Britain*, rarely, if ever, mention socialism at all, nor do practically any of its leaflets. In socialist education the Party has done little. One of the tragedies of the Labour Party, and I think the cause of its decline in Birmingham and the Midlands, is the complete lack of theory and socialist fibre among many of the leaders of the movement. Many of these now find themselves in the ranks of the " Pure Socialists."

In the day to day struggle the Labour Party unfortunately fails to capture the imagination of the people. Its attack lacks bite. There is no effective challenge to the Government. There is too often actual collaboration. It is said that our leaders do not want to turn this govern-

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ment out. I do not think this is true, but their attitude frequently helps to create that impression.

Chamberlain went to Munich with the blessing of the Party. For eighteen months the Party supported " non-intervention " in Spain. To-day they are backing National Service, and our parliamentary leaders are once again sitting on the doorstep of No. 10 Downing Street, whilst they accept at its face value Chamberlain's sham conversion to collective security. If this is not class collaboration, what is ? The consequence is that Chamberlain is able to dupe the nation with the old gag of " National Unity " and is in a stronger position than before. Is it surprising that the elector thinks that the fight is a sham fight and is not interested ? This policy will not rally the people for the Party against the Government.

Cripps offers the alternative, a policy to rally at once round the Labour Party all the democratic forces of the nation in an alliance which can bring down Chamberlain and end the march to fascism in Britain and Europe.

Such a combination in action does not mean that we abandon our socialist education. This can proceed intensified in a virile party revitalized by going into action, with wider contacts and a broader base. It does not mean sacrificing the independence of the party but increasing its vigour.

The present policy of exclusiveness advocated by the National E.C. is dictated not only by its socialism but by pure party sectarianism. As a result of domination by Transport House officials all importance is placed upon the machine. It does not appear to be understood that the machine must be manned by flesh and blood personnel, whose enthusiasm and work depend upon a fighting policy of our leaders much more than upon organisation. They think of the Party as a closed circle; all inside are socialists (unless, of course, they support Cripps), all outside are not. We must not associate with Liberals like Geoffrey Mander, Wilfrid Roberts and others who are fighting by our side, whilst Thurtle says that " Chamberlain is the man for the job." Such things do not disturb our leaders' preconceived notions. The policy and tactics which were adopted twenty or thirty years ago are good enough for to-day and to-morrow.

This is a mechanical and static view of the political struggle. Political reality is not static; it consists of dynamic situations continually changing with social forces, loose and not demarcated by rigid lines, interacting and clashing. The tactics of yesterday may be out of date to-day. Those of to-day may be useless to-morrow. We must react to the changing position and adopt the immediate policy and tactics which our socialist understanding of the struggle dictates.

That line to-day is the people's front, and the socialists of to-day, unhampered by the petrified politics of a generation ago, are fighting to get this line accepted by Whitsuntide.

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Trade Unions and National Service

BY A. W. BRADY

(SECRETARY, GLASGOW TRADES COUNCIL).

THE GOVERNMENT'S NATIONAL Service Scheme is proving very unpopular throughout the ranks of the Trade Union Movement in Scotland. The bitter experience of the Unions following the " industrial truce " of the War years—with its restrictions on Trade Union rights and dilution of labour—has not been forgotten.

Foremost in opposition to the scheme is the Glasgow Trades Council, representative of 80,000 organised workers. In their resolution to the Scottish Trades Union Congress this body of delegates declare :—

> That this Congress sees in the National Register, as in the Lord Derby Attestation Scheme, a deliberate attempt by the Chamberlain Government to place the Trade Union Movement in the same position as the Munitions of War Act did in 1915, and thus render it useless as a weapon of defence for the workers' rights and privileges. Congress expresses its emphatic opposition to the National Register as such scheme will be used by the Chamberlain Government to further their betrayal of democracy both at home and abroad.

A resolution from Edinburgh and District Trades Council asks the Congress to adopt the view " that the leaders of the movement have made a grave mistake in so far supporting this reactionary measure, and believes that it is definitely the intention of the Government to use this support as a means towards imposing industrial conscription on the working class."

Aberdeen Trades Council is also opposed to the scheme and in a motion states a wish that the Congress ask affiliated organisations to refrain from supporting or nominating members to committees set up for the purpose of administering the scheme.

The points of view are indicative of how unfavourably large sections of the Trade Union Movement in Scotland have reacted to the action of the General Councils of the British and Scottish Trades Union Congress.

In a booklet recently issued entitled *What the T.U.C. is doing* there is a section devoted to National Service in which the following paragraphs appear :—

> As one crisis has succeeded another, new problems have been pushed into the foreground of day-to-day politics.
>
> Sharply prominent among them is the question of National Service. On this topic it would seem to be relevant to explain the basic motives by which the General Council have been actuated.

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> To begin with, the attitude of the movement towards defence and security is well known. That attitude has inevitably involved an uncompromising antagonism to the foreign policy of the " National " Government, which in this matter particularly has certainly shown itself no true friend to the cause of democracy. Certainly nothing has happened to change our belief that the line taken by the Government has been a major disaster to the peace of the world.
>
> But this does not alter the fact that defence of the civil population in the event of war is, and must be, a matter of vital concern to trade unionists, who with their dependents form roughly one-third of the population of the country.
>
> In that case the responsibility of the T.U.C. is clear and inescapable. We obviously could not decline to aid in the work of defence; just as obviously, we had to do what we could to maintain the voluntary principle recognised in the Government's National Service Scheme.

Here stated is a most bewildering piece of argument that can only lead to the greatest possible confusion in the thoughts and actions of those who accept it as guidance for their attitude towards peace and defence. The issue of whether the Trade Union Movement shall support, or oppose the present Government's National Service Scheme cannot be reduced to the simple question of for or against defence measures for Britain.

" Defence of the civil population," state the T.U.C., " is a matter of vital concern to trade unionists," and with such a statement there will be general agreement in the ranks of the movement. But defence is not something separate and apart from the foreign policy of the Government, which the T.U.C. admit has been " a major disaster to the peace of the world."

The T.U.C. must realise that there can be no effective defence policy for Britain without Collective Security; without full and frank co-operation with Soviet Russia; without organised resistance to Fascist aggression. The Chamberlain Government's continued evasion of these necessary steps to bring a halt to Hitler and Mussolini is clear evidence of how false and dangerous to the movement is the present co-operation in National Service.

The rank-and-file members of the unions are under no illusions regarding the real meaning of National Service at the dictates of the National Government. The Easter conferences of the National Union of Clerks, the Shop Assistants and the Distributive and Allied Workers have spurned the advice of the T.U.C. and decisively rejected giving any support to the National Register.

The delegates to the conferences of these important National Unions were meeting when the news came through of Mussolini's brutal and unwarranted assault on defenceless Albania. Chamberlain's Fascist friend had once more demonstrated the rottenness and treachery of the National Government's policy.

" Categorical assurances have been given us by the Government that they intend to preserve the voluntary system," state the T.U.C.

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with an air of wisdom and good faith. As if this Government's word could be trusted or their integrity relied upon.

The report of the General Council of the S.T.U.C. showing the result of their effort to secure nominations from the Unions and Trades Councils for service on the local committees indicates a large volume of opposition in the ranks of the movement.

9 Trades Councils forwarded nominations.
12 Trades Councils declined to nominate; and
2 Trades Councils did not reply.

The number of Unions asked to nominate were 73, of which 27 forwarded nominations and the remaining 46 have either declined to nominate, failed to reply or are still considering the matter.

It would be unwise to try and predict the decision likely to be taken by the S.T.U.C. following the discussion on National Service at their forthcoming Congress. Sufficient to say that the forces against co-operation with the Government are growing in strength and will continue to grow as the understanding of Chamberlain's real policy of sell-out to the Fascists penetrates the ranks of the Unions.

Will it be considered presumption on my part to suggest to the members of the General Council of both T.U.C.'s and to those leaders of the Trade Union Movement who are supporting National Service that they are expending their energies in the wrong direction? The best form of service that can be rendered the people of this country both in relation to peace and their economic interests is to secure the maximum co-operation in getting rid of Chamberlain.

The Labour and Trade Union Movement of this country is unrelenting in its opposition to Fascism, alive to and aware of what it would mean to those things we cherish and have spent our life-time in building. To-day our movement is seriously endangered by the pro-Fascist policy of Chamberlain, of which National Service is an integral part, threatening our independence and preparing the way for industrial conscription. Our movement is unsparing in its efforts for the cause of peace and social well-being and therefore must see in the present Government the great obstacle to progress.

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Economic Crisis and Armaments

BY JOHN KNIGHT

IN HIS REPORT to the 18th Congress of the C.P.S.U., Stalin presented a picture of the development of world economic conditions in recent years, at the same time giving an outline of "economic things to come."

I.—The New Crisis

> The economic crisis which began in capitalist countries in the second half of 1929 continued to the end of 1933. After this the crisis passed into depression and then a certain revival, a certain advance of industry began. But this revival of industry did not develop into prosperity as is usually the case in the period of revival.

The more than 1½ million unemployed workers in Great Britain in 1937, the 10,000,000 unemployed workers in the United States in 1937, the many factories standing idle or working half-time in France during 1937 are eloquent testimony to the fact that the revival following the crisis of 1929-32 did not end in a phase of widespread prosperity.

> . . . . beginning with the second half of 1937, a new economic crisis began which took hold of the United States in the first place, and then England and France, and a number of other countries.
>
> Thus the capitalist countries had hardly succeeded in recovering from the blows of the recent economic crisis before they found themselves face to face with a new economic crisis.

What are the consequences of the fact that the new crisis hit the capitalist countries only shortly after they had recovered from the preceding crisis? And what are the effects of the general political situation—war in China, a civil war in Spain only temporarily suspended, fascist aggression everywhere in the world—upon the character of the world economic crisis which has already begun?

Stalin summarises the chief effects as follows:—

1. Capitalism possesses far fewer reserves of strength to combat the effects of the crisis, to find in fact a "normal way" out of the crisis.

2. The crisis develops much more unevenly than the previous crisis, because the switching over of national economy on to a war basis, as in the fascist states, has delayed the outbreak of a crisis in these states.

3. For these two reasons the new crisis will be much worse than the previous one and it will be more protracted.

II.—War Economy and the Crisis

The cyclical crisis which is upon us is, like all cyclical crises, an

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over-production crisis. While this is not the place to discuss the causes of over-production crises, it is necessary to remember the chief features of an economy menaced by an over-production crisis. They are :

1. The production of capital goods, that is of means of production, is growing faster than the (also growing) purchasing power of the buyers of means of production.

2. The production of consumption goods is growing faster than the (also growing) purchasing power of the consumers of these goods.

In consequence of the increasing disparity between production and buying power stocks begin to accumulate, larger and larger proportions of current production become unsaleable—and an over-production crisis breaks out.

While it is easy to observe these phenomena in countries like Great Britain and France, some economists have been duped by certain specific developments in fascist countries into the belief that an over-production crisis cannot occur in countries which have put their industry on a war basis.

There is no doubt that during a war over-production cannot break out. Over-production can occur only if production increases faster than purchasing power. During a war, however, production not only does not increase faster than purchasing power, production even declines, and so does purchasing power.

During the last war, for example, production in Great Britain and Germany developed as follows :

Production and Country	1913	1918
Great Britain—		
Total Production . .	100	79
Capital Goods . .	100	87
Consumer Goods . .	100	71
Germany—		
Total Production . .	100	57
Iron and Steel . .	100	53
Textile Goods . .	100	17

One of the chief reasons for the decline of production during the war is the lack of man-power to keep the factories running. There are other reasons for the decline of production. But we need not discuss them here at length. The important thing to note is : during a war no over-production crisis can occur.*

Drawing their conclusion from the fact that during a war an over-production crisis is impossible some economists have argued that the same holds true of an economy put on a war basis, such as we can observe it in the fascist countries.

The question we have to investigate is : is an over-production crisis possible in a war economy such as we find, for example, to-day in

*By war we mean a war engulfing completely the whole nation. Colonial wars, however, are not wars in this sense. They absorb, for example, only a comparatively small percentage of the nation's man-power. This does not mean, however, that a colonial war cannot have the most far-reaching effects upon the economic conditions of the country waging it, if they are in a precarious state.

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Germany? And if so, how is it possible to have over-production in such an economy? Of the three fascist powers Stalin says:

> As regards the aggressor countries such as Japan, Germany and Italy, which have already reorganised their economy on a war basis, they have not yet, because of the intense development of their war industry, reached the stage of a crisis of over-production, although they are approaching it.

But how can they approach an over-production crisis? We can understand at first sight, that they are liable to over-production, just like any other capitalist state, as far as the production of civilian capital goods and of consumer goods is concerned. The production of such goods is kept down, but it is rising somewhat, and the purchasing power of the buyers of civilian capital goods and of consumer goods is rising still less. But these civilian goods play a relatively smaller and smaller rôle in national economy. An increasingly larger part of industry is engaged in the production of war materials.

War materials, however, are produced to order. That is, their sale is assured when production is started. How can there be over-production of war materials? The answer is this: war materials just like all other commodities have to be bought. True, the state orders them. But the state cannot order at the same time purchasing power for the buying of these commodities. It is dependent upon its revenue. If the state orders of war materials exceed the purchasing power of the state, then we have a genuine case of over-production, and then too an over-production crisis is impending. The state can increase taxes, it can issue loans, and yet, if we look, for example, at conditions in Germany, recent official utterances indicate that neither taxes nor loans suffice any longer to pay for the increasing amount of armaments orders. The last German financial decree according to which state orders have to be paid up to 40 per cent. by special bills which in turn up to 40 per cent. have currency value simply signifies that an over-production crisis is imminent. The state openly adopts inflationary measures; the over-production crisis, becoming obvious by the symptom of inflation, is coming, and very soon.

Thus, we see that a war economy before the outbreak of a large-scale war is liable to an over-production crisis just like any other form of capitalist economy. At the same time we see that this crisis will break out not only in the two spheres of national economy which we know to exist in "normal" capitalist economy, the sphere of producers and buyers of means of production or capital goods and the sphere of producers and buyers of consumption goods. It will also break out "in a third sphere," the sphere covering the producers of armament goods and their buyer, the state.

III.—Why does the Reorganisation of National Economy on a War Basis retard the outbreak of the Over-production Crisis?

National economy in the fascist states has been put on a war basis.

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The German economic system, for instance, has been reorganised on a war basis. While in Great Britain and in France the over-production crisis has set in already, in Germany it has still to come—though it is now very near. Why does it come later in Germany and in the other fascist states? Why does the placing of the national economy on a war basis delay the outbreak of an over-production crisis?

The reason for this delay is obviously not to be found in the sphere of the production of means of production nor in that of the production of consumption goods. We must look for it in the sphere of the production of armaments and the relation of armaments production to the buying power of the state. What is the decisive difference in this connection between the ordinary private buyer of commodities and the state as buyer of armaments? It is the fact that the state can command considerably more purchasing power than the private buyer. This not only means that it has quantitatively more purchasing power, it also means that it can increase its purchasing power in times of stress more than the private buyer. The state can increase taxation and the state can issue loans. Its credit facilities are very much greater than those of the private buyer. The purchasing power of the state can be more readily extended, and is less easily exhausted than that of the private buyer, and this means that it takes a longer time for the purchasing power of the state to lag behind the amount of production it orders than is the case between the production and the purchasing power of private capitalists.

The more terrorist the methods of extracting money from the masses of the people, and the longer the masses stand for these terrorist methods—the longer the state is able to keep its purchasing power at the level required by the armament orders. Therefore: firstly, the larger the share of the state as buyer of commodities the longer the crisis will be retarded—other things being equal; secondly, the more brutal the state as extortioner of money, the longer the delay of the crisis—other things being equal. Finally we must take into account a special feature of the fascist state. The fascist state is the instrument of government of the most reactionary section of finance capital. This most reactionary section of finance capital does not hesitate to increase also the taxes upon the rest of finance capital, to appropriate an increasing part of the profits otherwise collected by the less reactionary part of finance capital such as textile capital, the banking interests, shipping companies, etc. The fascist state is able to extend its revenue-collecting terror over a vastly greater field than the "ordinary" finance capitalist state. The fascist state, therefore, is able to delay the outbreak of a crisis even longer than increased brutality against the masses would warrant—other conditions being equal.

But other things are not equal. A fascist state usually has a very much more rapidly increasing expenditure sheet than a democratic capitalist state such as Great Britain for example. Hence, there are certain

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counter-tendencies against the continued prolongation of the pre-crisis period. These counter-tendencies usually are not strong enough completely to counter-balance the delaying tendencies, but they are decisive enough to shorten the prolongation considerably. In Italy and Japan, for instance, the over-production crisis is in its initial stage ; it began about a year after that in the democratic countries, and in Germany it will soon break out. Thus, there is a delay, but the delay does not make impossible the coincidence of the crisis in all capitalist countries, it does not render impossible a world economic crisis—but it makes for a very unequal development, and while probably there will be a time when all countries are in the grip of the world economic crisis, some may be at the end of it while others may be just in the midst of it, and others again just in its initial stage.

IV.—Does the turning to rapidly Increased Armament Production influence the Development of the Over-production Crisis in Great Britain, and if so, How ?

In Great Britain the over-production crisis is in full swing to-day. In spite of increased armament orders, production has declined in 1938 even in the iron and steel industry. But the armaments programme of 1938 is small indeed as compared with that envisaged for 1939 and the following years. Can this enlarged armament programme mitigate the crisis ?

It is obvious that increased armament orders will mean more business for companies engaged in armaments work, and that also other industries will benefit to a certain degree from these orders through the relatively increased purchasing power of the workers and employers in these companies (this relative increase may not be an absolute increase or may even be an absolute decline in purchasing power ; it is a relative increase in so far as without these orders the workers would be unemployed). To this extent these armament orders undoubtedly represent a mitigation of the crisis. But, we must ask, is this mitigation perhaps only a temporary one, and again is this mitigation not to be followed by an even greater acceleration and deepening of the crisis than would otherwise have been the case ? For though we have not dwelt here on this point, it is obvious that the over-production crisis in the fascist states will be a much more terrible one than that in other countries since it starts, among other things, already with an open or veiled state bankruptcy.

Let us see how the armaments business in Great Britain works. The increase in armaments expenditure for 1939 is to be met from loans. The loans to be raised are unprecedented in peace time. The state borrows already a really fantastic amount of purchasing power in order to be able to meet the armaments expenditure it has contracted for. It is under present capitalist conditions impossible to imagine the state being able to raise next year any large proportion of the

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increasing expenditure on armaments by taxation. It will have to go on borrowing—until the ordinary borrowing powers of the state are exhausted which will be the case in the not distant future. What will the state do then? It will try to increase its borrowing power by extraordinary means, or to be more exact, it will try inflationary measures —always accompanied by increased taxation which will bring in little as compared with what is required, but which will be an increasingly harder burden on the masses of the people.

This means that within the over-production crisis in the midst of which we are to-day, just within that sphere which might mitigate the effects of the present over-production crisis new contradictions are developing which will lead to a renewed and much more severe over-production crisis, an over-production crisis resulting from the giving of larger armament orders than the state can pay for.

While, therefore, the enlarging of the armaments programme may mitigate the effects of the present over-production crisis it will lead to a new accumulation of crisis elements so that the course of the present crisis may be a much more terrible one than could have been anticipated up to now. The present armaments programme, executed under the conditions of finance capitalist rule, must lead in the end to the prolongation and deepening of the present crisis.

V.—What Can We Do?

We are in the midst of an over-production crisis. The measures taken by the government will in the end only contribute to a deepening of the crisis. On the other hand, it is obvious that we must arm in the face of fascist aggression. True, collective security would mean that each of the countries bound to mutual aid in case of fascist aggression would have to arm less than if it had to face the aggressor alone. Yet, in spite of heavy expenditure during the preceding years exorbitant profits and incredible inefficiency have led to such an absolutely inadequate standard of military preparedness that even on the basis of a collective security policy we have to continue to arm for some time to come. But not under Mr. Chamberlain. Arms are a dangerous thing and the people of Great Britain must have control over them. They can entrust them only to a government to which they can entrust themselves, that is to a people's government. Britain must rearm under a people's government.

But would the effects of a people's front re-armament programme upon national economy be very different from those of re-armament under a Chamberlain government? Yes, indeed, they would be very different. Instead of becoming the starting-point of a new deepening of the economic crisis the armament sphere can under a people's government become the centre of genuinely mitigating influences—although the people's government would prefer, of course, a political situation which would permit the replacement of armaments by mass

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consumption goods.

As long as capitalism rules, as long as there is private accumulation of means of production, exploitation, and so on, so long will there be economic crises of over-production. But a people's front government could in certain respects isolate the armament sphere from the effects of capitalist production. A people's front government would nationalise the production of armaments and it could regulate armaments production and revenue in such a way that they really balance. A people's front government would increase taxes on the rich and lower taxes on the poor. If from this change in taxation methods no increase of revenue should result, the lowering of the taxes balancing the raising of taxes, the people's government would still have at its disposal considerably more purchasing power than the Chamberlain government. For it would save the enormous profits which the Chamberlain government secures to-day for the armaments industry, and considerably greater efficiency in production would provide further revenue. Furthermore, a genuine policy of collective security would require a smaller armaments programme than a policy of isolation or, to use a silly word for an equally silly policy, a policy of bisolation (Great Britain and France).

Hence, the importance of a people's front government for the specific evils dealt with here is twofold. It would definitely mitigate the crisis, while a Chamberlain government with its gigantic armament programme can only mitigate the crisis very temporarily and only by causing a much more terrible crisis a short time later. Secondly, the general foreign policy of a people's government would relieve the masses of Great Britain of much effort directed to the production of armaments goods, of goods of destruction. It would free a considerable part of capital and labour for useful purposes, for purposes of immediate value to the masses of the people, for the production of consumption goods.

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Indian Nationalism After Tripuri

BY BEN BRADLEY

TRIPURI, A VILLAGE in Central Provinces, sprang into fame when the Indian National Congress decided to hold its 52nd Session there in March last. Despite the fact that certain issues and serious conflicts overshadowed the eve of this Congress Session, the delegates who attended were able to overcome these conflicts and register very remarkable and important decisions. The Resolution on the " National Demand " must be considered a definite political advance. This resolution calls for a " nation-wide struggle," and demands that the Congress organisations and also the Congress Governments should take steps to prepare for this.

The possibilities of carrying this resolution into effect can be better understood when we measure the struggle of the Congress. Within three years the Indian National Congress has increased its membership from six hundred thousand to a figure which stands now at over four millions. This phenomenal growth of the Congress membership has reflected the increasingly strong and representative character of the Congress as the united organisation of the national movement with the overwhelming election victories of 1937, the achievements of the Congress Ministries in the Provinces and the accompanying mass awakening. The growth of Congress membership has helped to transform the character of the Congress, raising to a high level the popular struggle against Imperialism, and is one of the most important features in the situation in India.

Coupled with this there has been the unprecedented development of the struggle of the workers and peasants. On the workers' side the most significant event was the achievement of unity of the Trade Union movement at Nagpur last year which was quickly followed by the fusion of a number of parallel unions. In the strike struggles the workers have shown remarkable determination. The textile workers of Cawnpore, after a long struggle, won a victory forcing the millowners to implement the recommendations of the Congress Inquiry Committee, and while cementing Congress-Labour unity, have built a powerful union of 18,000 strong.

Powerful strike movements were also conducted in places as far apart as Kandesh, Sholapur, Calcutta, Madras and Bihar ; while one of the most important events of the year was the great one-day Protest Strike of the Bombay workers on November 7 against the Trades Dispute Bill.

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At the same time there has been a tremendous development of peasant struggle and organisation. By huge demonstrations and marches and daily struggles against the Zamindars, they are developing their movement against oppression and terrorism. The third Session of the All-India Kisan Sabha which met at Comilla represented the organised strength of 550,000 paying members. The fourth session which has just concluded at Gaya records a membership of over 800,000.

In unity with the growth of the mass movement in what is known as British India, the people of the Indian States, forced hitherto to exist under the despotic rule of the Rajahs and Princes, have moved into action demanding democratic rights and civil liberties. Throughout the States, in Orissa, Rajputana, Rajkot, Gujerat and Deccan, people have been drawn into this struggle. Extreme terror and the shooting down of people has characterised the struggle in Mysore, Travancore, Dhenkanal, Talcher, Ranpur and other States. The people in the States organised themselves into Praja Mandals (States' People's Party) in order to achieve democratic rights and relief from their economic burdens.

These mighty mass struggles of the workers, peasants and States people during 1938, the building of their independent working-class organisations, and the rapid increase in the membership of the Indian National Congress indicated a political awakening of vast new sections of the Indian people. These newly-awakened sections provided a dynamic force within the National movement, demanding the fulfilment of the Congress election pledges and the development of Congress activity towards the utilisation of the mass force as a weapon to challenge Imperialism.

The Congress has been functioning in office as Ministries for two years in nine Provinces out of the eleven in British India. We must recognise the restricted possibilities imposed by financial limitations under the Constitution, for carrying through legislation. Despite this, the Congress Ministries in these Provinces have gone some way towards redeeming their election pledges in the face of these extreme difficulties.

While the workers have been pressing their demands for decent wages and conditions and for factory legislation, and the peasants have been demanding relief from indebtedness, reduction of rent, revision of Tenancy Laws and more expenditure for social and cultural amenities, there has been a growing feeling that the Congress Ministries have not moved quickly enough.

Jawaharlal Nehru has indicated this in his statement, "Where Are We?" as follows:

> The machinery of Government was working in much the same way as of old, although various reforms had been introduced. In Madras especially the Congress Government functioned in some ways perilously like the old Government.

This tremendous mass awakening was not merely expressing itself

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in the demand that the Congress Ministries fulfil their election pledges more speedily, but that the Congress organisation be adapted to methods of struggle more fitted to the conditions of a mass party ; they demanded that the struggle against the Federation be conducted, not only within the Parliamentary sphere, but also outside.

The question of Federation became the centre-point of these gathering issues within the movement. The Congress stood committed to a policy of resisting and preventing the introduction of the Federal Constitution, which would represent, not in any sense even a limited constitutional advance, but a strengthening of reaction and of the grip of imperialism in India. The acceptance of office in the Provinces was clearly understood and stated in all official documents to represent not an acceptance of constitutionalism, but a stage of preparation for future mass struggle to win complete independence on the basis of a Constitution framed by a freely elected Constituent Assembly.

Imperialism, on the other hand, was determined to impose the Federal plan at as early a date as possible, saw in the formation of the Provincial Ministries a step to a policy of collaboration, and openly expressed the hope that, despite the official decisions to the contrary, in practice it would be able to secure, when the time came, the co-operation of moderate elements in the leadership of the Congress. Various conversations took place between prominent representatives of imperialism and individual Congress leaders, and rumours began to be spread that a compromise was in prospect. There was no basis in any official declarations for such rumours. It was true, however, that individual moderate leaders had made statements which implied a possible compromise on the basis of a modified Federal Constitution ; and many left wing elements, already alarmed at the " drift to constitutionalism," and knowing that the right wing was dominant in the " High Command," feared that, despite brave words, a surrender would follow.

In reality the deeper issue behind these controversies lay in the question of the mass basis of the Congress and its relation to the developing mass struggle of the workers and peasants. Only in proportion as the Congress deepened and strengthened its mass basis and its organic relation to the mass struggle could it develop the strength to be capable of defeating Federation and imposing its own terms on imperialism. The fears expressed by the moderate elements of the leadership with regard to the rapid advance of the workers' and peasants' movement, the deprecation of class struggle as a violation of " non-violence," and increasing readiness to use or defend police coercive measures against strikes and unrest, meant inevitably that, whatever their subjective intentions, objectively they were travelling along a path which led to increasing compromise with imperialism. This danger, however, was not to be met by shrilly reiterated negative declarations or denunciations of the right wing, but only by a positive

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constructive programme and work for strengthening the mass basis of the Congress, increasing its responsiveness to mass demands, building up workers' and peasants' organisation, enlightening the membership on the issues and working to influence the policy of the Ministries accordingly. This was the task which the Socialists and Communists, who were winning increasing influence within the left wing, tried to accomplish.

It was in this situation that Subhas Chandra Bose, who had been nominated President the previous year without a contest, decided to contest the Congress Presidential election this year for re-election, on the basis of posing the political issue of launching a nation-wide struggle against Federation and resisting the tendencies, which he described as existing in the right wing leadership, towards compromise. For the first time the presidential election was contested. The key importance of the contest lay in the fact that the Working Committee, or ruling organ of the Congress, is not elected, but nominated by the President ; thus the election of the President is the constitutional opportunity for the voice of the membership to be expressed with regard to the character of the leadership of the Congress. The opposing candidate to Bose was supported by Gandhi and the majority of the members of the old Working Committee. Bose was supported by the Communists, Socialists and Left Nationalists. In the event Bose was elected by 1575 to 1376 votes.

The election of Bose, in the face of the opposition of the official machine, led to a sharp inner crisis. In fact the result of the personal election of a President, while having its importance as a barometer of feelings among the rank and file, could by no means be regarded as a definitive political judgment or indication of a left majority in the membership. The subsequent proceedings at Tripuri were to prove this. But the interpretations that were at first placed on the result, both among many on the right and on the left, were such as to raise dangers of sharp division imperilling the unity of the Congress.

M. K. Gandhi, in a public statement, interpreted the result as a personal defeat for himself and his policies, and threatened the possibility of a secession of right wing from the Congress. Twelve of the fifteen members of the Working Committee resigned, in order, as they explained, to leave a free field for Bose, and also on the grounds that they felt that in his election campaign he had cast aspersions on their *bona fides*. Jawaharlal Nehru also resigned from the Working Committee, though with a separate statement explaining his special viewpoint (this will be found more fully explained in the booklet issued by him in connection with the crisis, entitled " Where Are We ? "). The imperialist press loudly announced a " split " of the Congress. The controversy, as it developed, was in danger of moving from a political to a personal plane.

While the Right Wing viewed with alarm the re-election of S. C. Bose

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and the consolidation of Left forces around him as being a challenge to their leadership, certain disruptive elements on the left began pressing for the " seizure of power " and the formation of an entirely new Working Committee around S. C. Bose. Since the left wing is still a minority in the Congress, as the results of Tripuri showed, this would have meant an attempt to impose a minority leadership on the Congress and thus invite a split.

When the Tripuri Congress met, there was thus a dangerous crisis requiring to be solved. Both on the right and on the left there were tendencies which were ready to press forward the issue to a split. Those sections, including the Socialists and Communists, who were concerned to maintain a united leadership representing and balancing the relation of forces in the National Front so as to preserve a united front for the coming fight against imperialism, were faced with an extremely difficult task. Nevertheless, it can be stated with confidence that the results of the Tripuri Session, even though not fully satisfactory in all respects, show that all efforts at disrupting the United National Front and the Congress, from whatever quarters, were frustrated for the time being and that the final decisions mark an advance in the national struggle for India's freedom.

Our task now is to examine the decisions of Tripuri and to find out how they can be effectively used as weapons to further strengthen the Congress, increasing its mass basis, and carrying forward the struggle.

It was clear that the first task facing the delegates at Tripuri, before policy or programme could be considered, was the need to clear the atmosphere. In this connection it was the Right which took the initiative by moving a resolution of confidence in Mahatma Gandhi. The resolution was a bid to restore the *status quo* in leadership around the personality of M. K. Gandhi, but at the same time dragging in a question of alleged aspersions cast against former members of the Working Committee and laying down that the new Working Committee must be nominated in accordance with the wishes of Gandhi. There was considerable opposition to the later part of this resolution. The Communists and Socialists stressed the need for a united leadership including members of the old Working Committee, at the same time calling for a policy of advance. While this resolution was passed (by 218 to 135 in the Subjects Committee) it left a considerable amount of heartburn among the delegates.

The main resolution of the Session was on the " National Demand." The resolution stated that the Congress has for more than half-a-century striven for the advancement of the people of India and that it had carried the Nation a long way towards Independence. The resolution traces the steps in pursuance of its objective and reiterates the Congress declaration of uncompromising opposition to the Federal part of the Government of India Act, and determination to resist its imposition.

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We will quote the rest of the resolution :

> The Congress declares afresh its solemn resolve to achieve independence for the nation, and to have a constitution framed for a free India through a Constituent Assembly elected by the people and without any interference by a foreign authority. No other Constitution or attempted solutions of the problem can be accepted by the Indian people. The Congress is of the opinion that, in view of the situation in India, the organised strength of the National Movement, the remarkable growth of the consciousness of the masses, the new awakening among the people of the Indian States, as well as the rapid development of the world situation, the time has come for full application of the principle of self-determination to India, so that the people of India might establish an independent democratic State by means of a Constituent Assembly. Not only the inherent rights and the dignity of the people demand this full freedom, but also the economic and other problems which press insistently on the masses cannot find a solution, nor can India get rid of her poverty and keep pace with modern progress unless the people have full opportunities of self-government and growth, which Independence alone can give. Provincial Autonomy affords no such scope for development, and its capacity for good is being rapidly exhausted ; the proposed Federation strangles India still further, and will not be accepted. The Congress therefore is strongly of the opinion that the whole of the Government of India Act must give place to the Constitution for a free India made by the people themselves.
>
> An independent and Democratic India will face the solution of our great problems rapidly and effectively, and will line herself with the progressive peoples of the world, and thus aid the cause of Democracy and freedom.
>
> With a view to the speedy realisation of the Congress objective and in order to face effectively the national and international crises that loom ahead, this Congress calls upon all parts of the Congress organisations as well as the Congress Provincial Governments and the people generally to prepare themselves to this end, to promote unity and in particular to strengthen, purify and discipline the organisation, removing weakness and corrupting influences so as to make it an effective organ of the people's will.

On the question of the Indian States the Congress resolution welcomes the awakening of the people in the States. The resolution registered Congress support to the demand for responsible government and Civil Liberties, and declared that the movement for freedom and self-expression in the States was an integral part of the larger struggle for freedom of the whole country. It is also important to note that the resolution states :

> The great awakening that is taking place among the people may lead to a relaxation or to a complete removal of the restraint which the Congress has imposed upon itself, thus resulting in the ever-increasing identification of the Congress with the States peoples. The Working Committee is authorised to issue instructions in this behalf from time to time as the occasion arises.
>
> The Congress desires to reiterate that its objective, complete independence, is for the whole of India, inclusive of the States, which must have the same measure of political, social, economic and religious freedom as a part of India.

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This was the first occasion that the W.A.F.D. Party of Egypt sent a delegation to attend a Congress Session. The visit of the W.A.F.D. delegation symbolised the solidarity of the movement for freedom in India and Egypt.

The resolution of greetings to China reads:

> The Congress sends its greetings to the people of China and its deepest sympathy in their trials and privations in their struggle against ruthless and inhuman Imperialism. It congratulates them on their heroic resistance.
>
> The Congress expresses its approval of the sending of a Medical Mission on its behalf to the people of China and trusts that this Mission will continue to receive full support, so that it may carry on its work of succour effectively and be a worthy symbol of Indian solidarity with China.

The resolution on the "National Demand" and that on the Indian States both mark a political advance of the Congress on the previous session held at Haripura. The "National Demand" resolution lays the basis for the development of a nation-wide struggle. The whole of the Government of India Act must go, giving place to a Constitution for a free India framed by a Constituent Assembly fully representative of the people of India. It must be the immediate task of sections of the national movement, united within the ranks of the Congress in India, to translate into action the last paragraph of the resolution—the Tripuri Congress calls upon "all parts of the Congress organisations as well as the Congress Provincial Governments and the people generally to prepare themselves to this end, to promote unity and in particular to strengthen, purify and discipline the organisation, removing weakness and corrupting influences so as to make it an effective organ of the people's will."

The rapidly-moving international situation leaves no time to be lost. Tripuri is over—our task must be how to make the Tripuri resolutions decisions for action. The plan of action put forward by the Communists was not accepted—there is no doubt that it would have strengthened the resolution—but the task now is to strengthen the execution of the resolution. The resolution gives a call to the people of India, to the Congress organisations and to the Congress Governments to prepare for a nation-wide struggle.

There are tremendous possibilities taking the resolution as it stands. The extent to which the resolution becomes one of action will depend upon how the Congress organisation and Congress membership as a whole develop their local plan of action which will prepare the country for the nation-wide struggle. Each step must be carefully considered. We put forward the slogans at Tripuri—Unity and Struggle—these must still be our slogans. No steps should be consciously taken which would impair the unity of the Congress. The degree to which we are able to prepare and strengthen the Congress organisations, the type of questions on which the Congress organisations will be activised

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must inevitably be reflected in the policy which the Congress Ministries pursue. The task now falls upon the shoulders of all earnest Congressmen to make the Tripuri National Demand resolution a live resolution.

The resolution on States people has shown what can be accomplished —the tremendous advance made by the Indian States peoples between Haripura and Tripuri. By the steady activity and struggle of the States' people themselves, they compelled the Congress to recognise the relationship of the struggle in the States as integral parts of the larger struggle for freedom of the whole country.

A number of lessons are provided by Tripuri. We can certainly regard Tripuri Session of the Congress as an advance. The Communists and Socialists as a whole seriously endeavoured to meet in a responsible fashion a difficult situation and greatly helped in the constructive result which was finally achieved.

We should beware of false friends—those who gave the lead for a disruptionist "Revolutionary" Working Committee—and thus did their utmost to wreck the unity of the National Front.

The Socialist and Communist unity achieved at Tripuri must be carried to a wider field. A united Socialist Party would be capable of obviating the weaknesses that showed themselves at Tripuri and will be the surest guarantee that the political decision of that Session of the Congress will be implemented.

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The Position in Palestine and the Path to Peace

BY I. RENNAP

I.

IN THE MARCH issue of the German "National-Socialist" monthly journal there appeared an article by Herr Rosenberg, spiritual leader of the German Nazis, which was written on the day of the opening of the recent Arab Jewish Conferences in London. He declared that Germany had a direct interest in Palestine, and that it was the duty of all Germans to concern themselves with the Palestine problem because this problem is closely interlinked with the most important life interests of the Reich; and in the solution of this problem consideration has to be taken of these interests.

What important interests has Nazi Germany in Palestine? The reply is hinted at in the Annual Report of the German General Staff for 1939. Plans are given there for an attack on the British Empire. According to these plans it is *essential for Nazi Germany to support every freedom movement anywhere in the British Empire as one of the means to cut off Britain from her Colonies and Dominions.*

Here we have the reason for Nazism's interest in Palestine and its "support" for the liberation and self-determination of the Palestine Arabs. Nazism, which has destroyed every vestige of freedom in Germany and the new territories it has conquered in Europe, demands national "freedom" for the Palestine Arabs, *because "sympathy" and "support" for the national independence struggles of the colonial peoples against Imperialism is now part of Fascism's war strategy against the democracies.*

Fascism has to-day placed on the order of the day a redivision of the globe in its favour. Its objective is not merely a return of former colonies and a redivision of the Versailles Treaty. Fascism aims at the destruction of the democracies, and at world domination. The conquest of Austria and Czechoslovakia has begun the repartition of Europe itself, with Fascism getting nearer to the colonial national liberation movements of the Near and Middle East. Fascism's colonial aims are merely part of its general war aims against the democracies so that it can gain important strategic positions and strengthen itself economically and militarily (food, raw materials and man power). One of the methods Fascism uses to gain a footing in the colonial countries is by pretending to support the existing colonial liberation movements, so that it can gain a foothold inside them to divert and harness them

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to its war chariot. The Arabian lands in the Near East are of great strategic importance within the British Imperialist lines of communication. Palestine, particularly, occupies a vitally important position as the gateway and " half-way house " to the Middle East and India. Here an Arab liberation movement has been fighting against British Imperialism for national independence for the last two decades. Therefore, Fascism has concentrated large forces in Palestine and the Near East with a view to gaining an important strategic base in the Near East. About a year ago, at a meeting in Jerusalem, German and Italian agents, as well as correspondents of Fascist newspapers, came to an agreement on joint action in the Arabian lands. Their activities have already borne fruit. Fascism has made serious inroads into the Arab liberation movement in Palestine.

II.

For nearly 20 years the Palestine Arabs have been struggling against British Imperialism. In so far as this struggle is waged for democratic rights and independence from Imperialism, it is a national revolutionary and progressive struggle. The driving forces of the Arab movement come from the peasants, workers, and urban middle classes; while the leadership is to-day in the hands of clerical, feudal landowning and bourgeois elements at whose head stands the clerical Grand Mufti, Haj Amin el Husseini. Socially, these elements are the most reactionary in Palestine. They could never be regarded, in view of their social position, as those who would lead the liberation struggle to its final conclusion. In the past they have tended to compromise with British Imperialism and dampen down and deflect the anti-Imperialist struggle. The Jewish settlers, who came into Palestine under Zionist auspices, fulfilled for these reactionary Arab leaders, in the early years of the Mandate, the rôle of a " lightning conductor." It was against these settlers, with the use of anti-Jewish chauvinism, that discontent and anti-Imperialist feeling were deflected. But the deep-seated and widespread character of the 1936 revolt forced these Arab leaders into leading the anti-Imperialist struggle if they were to retain their hold on the movement and turn away discontent from themselves. Thus, at that historic moment, these Arab leaders were fulfilling a progressive function. Anti-Jewish excesses were isolated and sporadic by-products of a definitely anti-Imperialist uprising (admitted as such by Zionist leaders and the Peel Commission). This is an indication of the higher political level of the uprising as compared with the one of 1929, which, as a result of the chauvinistic incitement of Arab leaders, took the form of pogroms against the Jews.

In 1937, the Peel Commission proposed the partitioning of Palestine. In principle, this was accepted by the British Government. This led to the revolt flaring up anew. Partition was uncompromisingly resisted by the Arab masses, led by the Arab Higher Committee at whose head was the Grand Mufti. This opposition led to the forcible dissolu-

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tion of the Arab Higher Committee by the Palestine administration. In so far as the Grand Mufti and his associates were still leading the anti-Imperialist struggle by fighting partition, they were still fulfilling a progressive function. At that time Fascist influence and activity in Palestine were relatively small. The open invasion and enslavement of politically independent States in Europe by Fascism, with its concomitant increasing penetration into the colonial countries for strategic bases to facilitate further conquests, had not yet begun.

Fascism's offensive in the early period of 1938 (conquest of Austria), was accompanied by intensified activity of Fascist agents in the colonial countries. This activity became further accelerated after the Munich betrayal. In the Near East, the headquarters of the Nazi central propaganda agency was set up in Cairo. " Culture clubs " for Arabs have been set up in the principal town of the Arabian lands. These, together with the German consulates and German business houses, have become clearing houses for Fascist propaganda material, as well as arms and material which are smuggled into Palestine.

In Palestine the beheading of the Arab movement and the use of troops and repressive measures (as well as the Arab Jewish antagonism created by British Imperialism and Zionist policy) facilitated tremendously the task of the Fascist agents. Fascism's most powerful weapon in Palestine (as well as in the neighbouring Arabian lands) is Britain's spearhead against the Palestine Arabs, the Zionist movement. Radio stations from Italy and Germany broadcast in Arabic the most rabidly anti-Jewish and anti-British incitement which inflames to the highest degree existing anti-Jewish feeling. Leaflets and all kinds of propaganda material are widely distributed, inciting Arabs against Jews.

All this has been going on with the knowledge and approval of the Grand Mufti and his clique. The Arab Nationalist leaders, who were never to be trusted and who might once again have come to terms with Britain, have accepted the active " support " and " sympathy " which the Fascist axis is lavishing upon national liberation movements to further its war aims. With the Grand Mufti's approval, German officers and " instructors " are organising and leading his partisan groups. Ischak Dervase, nephew of the Grand Mufti and his right hand man, stated at a gathering of Mufti supporters in Damascus, that large sums of money and shipments of arms were being received from Germany. The Grand Mufti's paper, *Al Lahab*, is openly financed by Fascist agents and propagates the vilest anti-Jewish incitements while hailing the Grand Mufti as the Arab " Fuehrer." According to *Reynolds* of April 2, 1939, the Nazi Government " has decided to convert 25,000 Nazis into Mohammedans ! They were to be organised in a newly-formed Muslim association, Jamait-e-Muslimin, which already has an understanding with the Mufti." These 25,000 " converts " are to be sent " to various Moslem countries as trade and political missionaries," while young Arabs are being trained in Italy and Germany for the same

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purpose, namely, to be Fascism's paid agents among the Arabs.

Fascism, in the name of "self-determination," has obtained a foothold in the Arab movement. This has reflected itself in increasing acts of violent terrorism against Jews (the massacre of Jewish women and children in Tiberias last November) as a result of anti-Jewish incitement stirred up by Fascist agents; on the other hand, the Fascist Revisionists (extreme Right wing of the Zionist movement) have been responsible for bomb outrages against Arabs (July, 1938 and February, 1939) in which scores of Arabs lost their lives. It is said that the Revisionists have contact with the Italian Fascists. Arab Jewish hostility and communal conflicts among the Arabs (terrorism by Mufti supporters against Arab anti-Mufti-ites, and counter terror by anti-Mufti-ites) have greatly increased. *This is precisely what Fascism aims at: to divert and complicate the Arab struggle from an anti-Imperialist struggle, which would further the liberation struggle of the Arabs, into an increasingly inner communal and anti-Jewish conflict which can only retard the struggle for national liberation and consolidate Fascism's influence whereby it can entrench itself in the Near East.*

The responsibility for this Fascist influence and its impeding of the Arab anti-Imperialist struggle lies with the Grand Mufti and his clique. By accepting Fascist "support" which has polluted the Arab movement, he and his satellites are undermining the Arab struggle for democratic rights and helping to strengthen Fascism. The Mufti, who was never to be trusted and who might once again have sold out to Britain, has now sold out to the Fascist axis instead.

On the other hand, British Imperialism also has its agents and allies in Palestine. Its main ally is the Zionist leadership which has as its aim the establishment of a Jewish majority in Palestine. Britain has used the Zionist movement as a buffer against Arab aspirations: and this has driven the Arabs into armed revolt. The other ally of Britain is the Nashashibi group of "moderate" Arabs, who represent that section of Arab landlords and capitalists who have become enriched by Zionist penetration under British rule through land sales to the Jews, and have, therefore, more than any other sectoin of the Arabs, always sought the path of compromise with British Imperialism and Zionist penetration. The Nashashibi group will betray the Arab independence struggle at the earliest opportunity.

Thus the struggle in Palestine to-day, viewed on a broad perspective of the present international situation, with Fascism seeking strategic and economic bases in the colonial countries at the expense of the democracies, has ceased to be a struggle *purely* of the Arab masses against British Imperialism and Zionist penetration. This struggle has now become complicated and influenced by the war aims of the Fascist axis at the cost of the peoples in Palestine.

The Arab people, supported by the progressive elements within Palestine Jewry, must wage an uncompromising struggle against the

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Grand Mufti and his associates. True, these leaders are demanding national independence for Palestine. But those reactionary nationalist leaders in Slovakia who have always demanded independence for Slovakia also had Nazi " support." Last March, in the Slovakian Diet, they proclaimed the independence of Slovakia. Two days later Slovakia was gobbled up by Nazi Germany. Therefore, every democrat who supports the national rights of the Arab people, must make it clear to them that the Grand Mufti's entanglement with Fascism can ultimately bring the Palestine Arabs, bad and oppressive as their lot is under British rule, the infinitely worse oppression and exploitation which their brethren in Tripoli under Mussolini are undergoing. The Palestine Arabs must cleanse their movement of its traitors and wreckers, in their struggle for democratic rights.

At the same time the Jews in Palestine and elsewhere must realize that the present Zionist leaders, with their policy of a Jewish majority which is opposed by the Arabs, bear, with Britain, a considerable share of the responsibility for Fascist penetration into Palestine, and, thereby, for strengthening of Jewry's mortal foe. To persist in this policy is objectively to assist in the undermining of Palestine Jewry and Jewry the world over.

The menace of Fascist penetration makes it imperative for the progressive forces among the Jews and Arabs in Palestine to come together for a unified struggle against the Fascist axis and its agents in the Arab and Jewish camps. Both sides must effectively within their own ranks stamp out acts of terrorism which can only divide the Palestine peoples and open the gates to Fascist penetration. And alongside this struggle with the support of the world Labour and democratic movement, must be waged the struggle against British rule for democratic rights for all peoples in Palestine. The smashing of Fascist influence in Palestine and in the Arab movement will facilitate and advance the struggle for democratic institutions.

The progressive elements among Arabs and Jews must, through their democratically elected representatives, reach agreement on all the problems of Palestine, such as democratic government, immigration, agrarian reforms, land sales, etc., which would erect a barrier to the penetration of Fascism. Such an agreement, however, will never be reached so long as Weizman and Ben Gurion represent the Jews, and the Mufti, the hireling of the Fascist axis, represents the Arabs, with British Imperialism acting as a " mediator " and trying to effect a " rapprochement." The failure of the recent Arab Jewish Conferences is another clear proof of this.

III.

The Arab Jewish Conferences have ended in a complete deadlock. The British Government's plan for a solution of the problem has been rejected by both sides.

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In an attempt to placate the Palestine Arabs, some concessions have been made to them at the expense of the Zionists. Fear of Fascist penetration, as well as the deep-seated character of the revolt, has made the National Government abandon its firm stand for the continuation of the Mandate even in a modified form. To dispel the fear among the Arabs of Jewish domination, the Balfour Declaration (*i.e.*, the war promise made to the Zionists that Britain would help in creating in Palestine a Jewish National Home : taken by the Zionists to mean a Jewish majority and ultimately a Jewish State) has been blatantly repudiated. Finding Zionism and Zionist policy no longer able to serve her purpose, Britain has cynically thrown aside its faithful servants, the Zionist leaders. But while doing this, Britain has by no means given way on the basic demand of the Arabs, namely, Palestine to become a democratic State linked by Treaty with Britain on the lines of Iraq and Egypt. A plan has been worked out where ostensibly a Palestine State linked with Britain will come into existence—but in stages, through an interim period, and contingent upon Arab Jewish co-operation. Jewish immigration will be drastically restricted so that the total number of Jews in Palestine should always be, roughly, about one-third of the population. Arabs and Jews will be co-opted to the Administration during the interim period, thus giving the appearance that Britain is seriously attempting to draw together the Arabs and Jews to run their own country. Actually, the plan in practice would achieve nothing of the sort. Under a façade of an Arab-Jewish-British administration, Britain's grip will still be on Palestine with supreme authority (through the power to veto any law or act) vested in the High Commissioner. Britain, who has no intention of relaxing her grip, will, as in the past, put every obstacle in the path of any real Arab Jewish co-operation. And since a sovereign Palestine State is, in the last resort, contingent on their co-operation, Britain will piously declare : We have tried to make Arabs and Jews work harmoniously ; but both are stiff-necked and will not co-operate. Therefore we must still rule in Palestine to " keep the peace."

This in essence is the British plan. The Palestine Arabs rejected the plan because the basic Arab demand was fobbed off (with the exception of the Nashashibis who were prepared to accept and co-operate with Britain). The Zionists rejected it because the Balfour Declaration was repudiated. And Britain has her excuse for the necessity for still " keeping the peace " in Palestine ! The Arab press shouts loudly about another British betrayal of the Arabs and associates with this the Jews. Clearly, in such circumstances, Fascism's penetration can only increase while the Mufti and his satellites will become more and more the slaves of Berlin-Rome at the cost of the Arab liberation movement. It becomes imperative therefore for some minimum programme to be advanced which can be acceptable to both Arabs and Jews as a basis on which agreement can be reached over the heads of

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Weizman, the Mufti and the " mediators " in Whitehall.

IV.

The Conferences have ended a chapter in the history of Zionism which began with the Balfour Declaration of 1917. Britain's war promise to support the creation of a Jewish State made it appear that the sincere but utopian aspiration for national Statehood, which exists among sections of Jewry, could be realised and made a concrete reality with British help. The Zionist leaders therefore took as their starting point that Britain must be their main and most important ally, implicitly believing that Britain would ultimately fulfil her pledge.

But British Imperialism was only concerned with fulfilling her pledges to the degree that they did not conflict with her Imperialist aims. Britain, after the war, needed a faithful watchdog to guard her strategic military bases in Palestine, and also a buffer against Arab national aspirations, the Balfour Declaration being Britain's excuse for withholding even formal independence from the Arabs, thus frustrating their national aspirations.

The dominant Zionist leaders appeared to be completely blind to the real motive of Britain in regard to the Jewish National Home. They therefore made no real attempt to understand the national aspirations of the Palestine Arabs, who, after all, were their neighbours with whom they had to live side by side. They never troubled to understand what effect, economically and psychologically, the aim of creating a Jewish State in Palestine would have on them. They never made any real attempt (in spite of much lip service) to explore possibilities of reaching an understanding with their Arab neighbours. They stood rigidly by their demand for the 100 per cent. fulfilment of the Balfour Declaration with British bayonets if necessary, and completely ignored the fierce opposition of the Arabs to a Jewish majority. They also imbued thousands of Jews (and non-Jews) with that same implicit trust in British Imperialism's good faith. Now they have been miserably discarded after being used by Britain. Therefore, the American Liberal journal, the *Nation* of March 4, 1939, is quite right when it says : " The Zionist leaders must also shoulder part of the blame for the present debacle. Instead of trying to come to terms with their Arab neighbours from the very beginning they hitched their waggon to the British Imperialist kite."

" They hitched their waggon to the Imperialist kite instead of trying to come to terms with their Arab neighbours." Herein lies the lesson which we have continually pointed out, and which the Yishuv (Palestine Jewry) must learn.

The present Zionist policy, the Weizman-Ben Gurion policy, is bankrupt *because these leaders tried to create something which is impossible* (*a Jewish majority and State in Palestine*) *relying wholly on a treacherous ally who assured them that this was possible.* For the Yishuv

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to continue to follow and still demand the fulfilment of this policy is to court disaster and help Fascism to entrench itself further in Palestine. The Yishuv's *only* path to-day is " to come to terms with their Arab neighbours." This would not, of course, mean coming to the Arabs as supplicants, cap in hand. The Yishuv, numbering 450,000 Jews, is to-day a strong economic and political force in Palestine. It can play an important and progressive rôle in Palestine's future development. It can be of great benefit to the Arabs, economically and culturally, which the Arabs would not be slow to recognise. *Therefore, the Yishuv's immediate task is to follow the lead of those Jewish leaders who have long advocated a rapprochement with the progressive Arabs, over the heads of British Imperialism and the reactionary leaders of both sides.*

Who are these Jewish leaders ? First, there is Dr. Judah Magness, President of the Hebrew University in Palestine and a member of the Jewish Agency, whose plan for an Arab Jewish rapprochement is based on a simple, self-evident truth, namely, that a minority in *any* country cannot, against the wishes of the existing majority, become a majority, in spite of so-called " historic rights " and " solemn pledges ", etc. Therefore, a rapprochement can only be effected *on the basis of the existing situation and present realities in Palestine.* The Jews in Palestine *are* a minority, although an important and very powerful one. The main lines of his plan are that an understanding (if only for a given period) should be reached on the present existing ratio of Jews to the non-Jewish population (roughly 40 per cent Jews to non-Jews) in a democratic Palestine with guaranteed rights for all peoples. This plan, in the main, has the support in Palestine of progressive Liberals, Socialists and Communists alike. This plan is based on a sober estimation of the situation, free from chauvinism and aggressive idealism and what is highly important is that *the Arabs are favourably inclined towards it.* It could form the basis of an agreement between Jews and Arabs in Palestine, without the " help " of the National Government, the Weizmans and the Muftis. Furthermore, there are left wing elements in the Palestine Jewish Labour Movement (Hashomair Hazair) who are for reaching a genuine understanding with the Arabs. There is S. Kaplanski, a veteran Labour Zionist leader who was removed from the Histadrut (Palestine Federation of Labour) leadership because of his bitter opposition to Partition, who warned the Zionist leaders that the Conferences in London would turn out to be a Jewish Munich, and urged on them the necessity of negotiating a peace pact with the Arabs and abandoning their close co-operation with British Imperialism.

The Jews in Palestine, like their Arab neighbours, want peace and freedom from conflict and strife. Large numbers are not concerned with the " diplomacy " of the present Zionist leaders. They desire to reach an understanding with their Arab neighbours and to live in peace with them. But the powerful Zionist bureaucracy suppresses, to a large

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extent, opinion which is opposed to official Zionist policy. In the Histadrut, opposition to Partition was autocratically muzzled. Further, the Palestine Review of March 10, 1939 complains " that the present Jewish National Council (Vaad Leumi) was elected eight years ago . . . while in the interim period 250,000 Jews have settled in the country. Thus, half the present Jewish population is unrepresented." It must be noted that the majority of these later immigrants are not Zionists, but refugees from Fascism. Many oppose the official Zionist bureaucracy.

Therefore, it is imperative to-day, through its democratically elected representatives, for the Yishuv to express its willingness to negotiate a settlement with the Arabs on the basis of the Magness plan. This would be met with a favourable response from the Arabs. Such a move would help to undermine the position of the present reactionary Arab leaders. These have been able to entrench themselves, to a not inconsiderable extent, as a result of the chauvinistic, pro-Imperialist policy of the official Zionist leaders. Large numbers of Arab workers and peasants, who might have been won with a correct policy for bi-national labour unity, have been driven by official Zionist policy into the arms of the Mufti. Such a move would help to strengthen the position of such young progressive Arab leaders like Raif N. Kuri who, in an article in the *New York World*, declared the fierce hatred of the progressive Arabs and the mass of the Arab population to Fascism, stating that the Arab people desire a democratic Palestine, representative of all the peoples with guaranteed rights for all and with the fullest autonomy for the Yishuv. Further, the Histadrut must show its willingness to abandon its present policy which divides Arab and Jewish workers, and to replace it with one of making the Histadrut the basis of a united bi-national Labour movement. Palestine Jewry must also do its utmost to encourage the setting up of bi-national farmers' and peasants' organisations and co-operatives.

The unity and co-operation of the Arab and Jewish labouring people, together with the great cultural and economic benefits the more developed Yishuv can bring to the Arabs, would be a cast-iron guarantee safeguarding the rights and liberties of the Yishuv. Arab Jewish workers' unity would rally round itself all the progressive forces among Jews and Arabs in the spirit of world unity against Fascism and for a democratic Palestine with equal rights for all. This would create possibilities for further Jewish immigration, not only into Palestine, but also into neighbouring Arab lands. A concrete example of the contribution these lands can indeed make towards relieving the terrible Jewish suffering created by Fascist barbarism is the offer made by Iraq which is prepared to take in 300,000 Jewish immigrants, provided a settlement is reached in Palestine.

The initiative for achieving peace in Palestine lies with the Yishuv. World Jewry, together with the Labour and progressive movements, must see that it takes it immediately.

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DOCUMENTS OF THE MONTH

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE MESSAGE SENT TO HITLER AND MUSSOLINI BY PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ON APRIL 14, 1939.

YOU REALISE, I am sure, that throughout the world hundreds of millions of human beings are living to-day in constant fear of a new war or even a series of wars.

The existence of this fear—and the possibility of such a conflict—is of definite concern to the people of the United States for whom I speak, as it must also be to the peoples of the other nations of the entire Western Hemisphere.

All of them know that any major war, even if it were to be confined to other continents, must bear heavily on them during its continuation, and also for generations to come.

Because of the fact that after the acute tension in which the world has been living during the past few weeks there would seem to be at least a momentary relaxation—because no troops are at this moment on the march—this may be an opportune moment for me to send you this message.

On a previous occasion I have addressed you on behalf of the settlement of political, economic and social problems by peaceful methods and without resort to arms.

But the tide of events seems to have reverted to the threat of arms. If such threats continue, it seems inevitable that much of the world must become involved in common ruin. All the world, victor nations, vanquished nations and neutral nations will suffer.

I refuse to believe that the world is of necessity such a prisoner of destiny. On the contrary, it is clear that the leaders of great nations have it in their power to liberate their peoples from the disaster that impends.

It is equally clear that in their own minds and in their own hearts the peoples themselves desire that their fears be ended.

It is, however, unfortunately necessary to take cognisance of recent facts.

Three nations in Europe and one in Africa have seen their independent existence terminated. A vast territory in another independent nation of the Far East has been occupied by a neighbouring State. Reports, which we trust are not true, insist that further acts of aggression are contemplated against still other independent nations. Plainly, the world is moving towards the moment when this situation must end in catastrophe, unless a more rational way of guiding events is found.

You have repeatedly asserted that you and the Italian (or German) people have no desire for war.

If this is true, there need be no war. Nothing has persuaded the peoples of the earth that any governing Power has any right or need to inflict the consequences of war on its own or any other people, save in the cause of self-evident home defence.

In making this statement we as Americans speak not from selfishness or fear of weakness. If we speak now, it is with a voice of strength and with friendship for mankind. It is still clear to me that international problems can be solved at the council table.

It is, therefore, no answer to the plea for peaceful discussion for one side to plead that, unless they receive assurances beforehand that the verdict will be theirs, they will not lay aside their arms.

In conference rooms, as in courts, it is necessary that both sides enter upon discussion in good faith, assuming that substantial justice will accrue to both, and it is customary and necessary that they leave their arms outside the room where they confer.

I am convinced that the cause of world peace would be greatly advanced if the nations of the world were to obtain a frank statement relating to the present and future policy of Governments.

Because the United States, as one of the nations of the Western Hemisphere, is not involved in the immediate controversies which have arisen in Europe, I trust that you may be willing to make such a statement of policy to me as head of a nation far removed from Europe in order that I, acting only with the responsibility and obligation of a friendly intermediary, may communicate such declaration to other nations, now apprehensive as to the course which the policy of your Government may take.

Are you willing to give assurance that your armed forces will not attack or invade the territory or possessions of the following independent nations: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland, France, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Jugoslavia, Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, Irak, the Arabias, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Iran?

Such an assurance clearly must apply not only to the present day, but also to a future sufficiently long to give every

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opportunity to work by peaceful methods for a more permanent peace.

I therefore suggest that you construe the word "future" to apply to a minimum period of assured non-aggression—ten years at least—a quarter of a century if we dare look that far ahead.

If such assurance is given by your Government I will immediately transmit it to the Governments of the nations I have named, and I will simultaneously inquire whether as I am reasonably sure each of the nations enumerated above will in turn give a like assurance for transmission to you.

Reciprocal assurances, such as I have outlined, will bring to the world an immediate measure of relief.

I propose that if it is given, two essential problems shall promptly be discussed in the resulting peaceful surroundings, and in those discussions the Government of the United States will gladly take part.

The discussions which I have in mind relate to the most effective and immediate manner through which the peoples of the world can obtain progressive relief from the crushing burden of armament which is each day bringing them more closely to the brink of economic disaster.

Simultaneously, the Government of the United States would be prepared to take part in discussions looking towards the most practical manner of opening up avenues of international trade, to the end that every nation of the earth may be enabled to buy and sell on equal terms in the world market, as well as to possess assurance of obtaining the materials and products of peaceful economic life.

At the same time those Governments, other than the United States, which are directly interested, could undertake such political discussions as they may consider necessary or desirable.

We recognise complex world problems which affect all humanity, but we know that study and discussion of these must be held in an atmosphere of peace. Such an atmosphere of peace cannot exist if negotiations are overshadowed by the threat of force or by the fear of war.

I think you will not misunderstand the spirit of frankness in which I send you this message. Heads of great Governments in this hour are literally responsible for the fate of humanity in the coming years. They cannot fail to hear the prayers of their peoples to be protected from the foreseeable chaos of war.

History will hold them accountable for the lives and the happiness of all—even unto the least.

I hope that your answer will make it possible for humanity to lose fear and regain security for many years to come.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

The Shortest Way with the Jews. Peter Harlow. (Allen and Unwin.) 6s. 256 pp.
L'U.R.S.S. et la Paix. Maxim Litvinov. (Bureau d'Editions.) Fr. 8.50. 200 pp.
Le Rôle de la Violence dans l'Histoire. Friederich Engels. (Bureau d'Editions.) Fr. 6.00. 130 pp.
Spain : What Next ? Harry Pollitt. (C.P.G.B.) 1d. 16 pp.
Is Mr. Chamberlain Saving Peace ? Victor Gollancz. (Victor Gollancz Ltd.) 1d. 40 pp.
We Live. Lewis Jones. (Lawrence and Wishart.) 7s. 6d. 334 pp.
Riches and Poverty. Gordon Schaffer. (Victor Gollancz Ltd.) 1s. 6d. 96 pp.
The Military Strength of the Powers. Max Werner. (Victor Gollancz Ltd.) 7s. 6d. 376 pp.
My Fifty-one Years at Euston. R. Carrington Willis. (G. Bell and Sons Ltd.) 5s. 208 pp.
New Tyrannies for Old. Lord Snell and Others. (Allen and Unwin.) 5s. 176 pp.
China Fights for Freedom. Anna Louise Strong. (Lindsay Drummond.) 5s. 231 pp.
Travailleurs d'Italie. Joseph Gaddi. (Bureau d'Editions.) Fr. 2.50. 111 pp.
Lénine et le Mouvement Ouvrier International. D. Manouilski. (Bureau d'Editions.) Fr. 1.00. 19 pp.
Les Droits des Chômeurs. Charles Bonnel. (Bureau d' Editions.) Fr. 2.50. 101 pp.
Histoire du Parti Communiste de l'U.R.S.S. (Bureau d'Editions.) 348 pp.
How to Reform the Army. Tom Wintringham. (Fact.) 6d. 98 pp.
Parenthood and Poverty. Louis Ginsburg. (Fabian Society and Gollancz.) 1s. 56 pp.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Spanish Lessons

Revolution in Spain by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. (Lawrence and Wishart. 8s. 6d.)
English Captain by Tom Wintringham. (Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.)
Memoirs of a Spanish Nationalist by Antonio Bahamonde. (United Editorial. 6d.)
I Helped to Build an Army by José Martín Blázquez. (Secker and Warburg. 15s.)

TREACHERY, FOREIGN INTERVENTION (especially that specific brand of it labelled " non-intervention ") and the failure of the official Labour movement to exert its full potential solidarity has brought the whole of Spain for the time being under the Fascist yoke. Its emancipation from that yoke remains, as Stalin said, " the common cause of all advanced and progressive mankind," above all of the working class. To achieve that emancipation, and preserve others from Spain's fate, it is necessary to draw certain lessons from the war of 1936-39 ; among these books we can find material which will be helpful.

The main feature in the admirable Marx and Engels' collection is the series of *New York Tribune* articles on the Spanish revolution of 1854 and Engels' masterly survey of the rising of 1873, entitled " the Bakuninists at Work." It is sufficient to say that the 1854 articles are comparable, in their brilliance of factual exposition and profound political analysis, with classics like " Eighteenth Brumaire " or " Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany." Here is that absence of all narrowness or dogmatism which the Philistines and sham " Marxists " can never understand (indeed, seem always obtusely unaware of). Here are the incisive passages which never fail to illuminate. Take this from Engels in 1855 :

> They (the Spaniards) certainly have, of all European nations, the greatest antipathy to military discipline. Nevertheless, it is possible that the nation, which for more than a hundred years was celebrated for its infantry, may yet again have an army of which it can be proud. But, to attain this end, not only the military system, but civil life, still more, requires to be reformed.

Most topical is Engels' outlining of the tasks of the Spanish working class in the struggle for the democratic republic and his smashing exposure of the Anarchists. In 1905 Lenin took up these arguments, pointing out how " Engels emphasises that the struggle for a republic in Spain was not and could not by any means be a struggle for a Socialist revolution," but that the workers had a vital part to play. Consequently " Engels demanded from the leaders of the proletariat that they should subordinate all their activity to the necessity of victory in the struggle that had begun," stressing " before everything . . . . aggressive style of action and the centralisation of revolutionary forces." Hampering that centralisation was the major crime of the F.A.I. in the late war. Their leaders showed themselves true descendants of the Bakuninists of 1873, whose " ultra-revolutionary clamour," as Engels demonstrates, boiled down in practice to " a dissipation of the means of revolutionary struggle without measure or reason " and a consequent betrayal of the movement to triumphant reaction.

Light on the darker side of Anarchism—the side which leads these " permanent revolution " men into active association with the final treachery

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of the Casado junta—is cast by Major Martín Blázquez. He experienced at first hand the repulsive mixture of racketeering and red tape which characterised the Anarchist control of Valencia (for example) in the early stages of the war. And he notes how an acquaintance of his " a wild reactionary, associated with the Falange," turned up as a full-blown member of the F.A.I. Martín was a regular officer of the old army, a moderate republican, sincere and observant but with no stamina ; he served on the Republican general staff until the spring of 1937 only, when his nerve failed and he fled to France. His book is of interest as a series of sidelights. He conveys admirably the effete and rotten atmosphere of the old Spanish officers' corps ; he exposes the bombast, bureaucratic aloofness, incompetence and lack of principle which marked Caballero and his entourage ; he pays repeated tribute to the discipline, efficiency and republican patriotism of the Communist Party. That his book should be quite superfluously sponsored by the egregious Borkenau, who seizes the opportunity to vent his " sociological " spleen on the Communist " totalitarians " (!) and to smuggle in doses of Trotskyist poison is a piece of sheer provocation.

Señor Bahamonde is another Spaniard who lost his nerve and fled. He however, was an important Franco official—Commissioner for Propaganda under Queipo de Llano—and it was not lack of stamina but the abominations of the " Nationalist " régime that drove him into self-imposed exile. Of these horrors his book affords vital objective evidence. To those who seek to denigrate the people's cause by " atrocity " propaganda he answers—" there is no possible comparison between the cold and methodical cruelty of the ' Nationalists,' organised by those who call themselves authorities, and the spasmodic outbursts of an incensed people who on occasions overrode the authority of public order." No one who wishes to gain some idea of the monstrous régime of torture and murder that the Chamberlain policy has riveted on Spain should fail to read Bahamonde's vibrant indictment. He himself witnessed wholesale summary executions, had dealings with the swaggering, sadistic gangsters of the Falange (who officially participate in the political " tribunals " which now " cleanse " Catalonia and Central Spain), saw how " atrocity " photographs were cynically faked. And so, he cries, " treason is triumphant and Spain becomes an Italo-German colony."

Major Martín, like his idol Prieto, appears to cling to the idea that the kind of regular army the Republic needed was a " non-political " one. Yet it was the " non-political " and commissar-less Carabinieros who broke at critical moments ; that the whole idea is false emerges from Wintringham's vivid account of the British Battalion of the International Brigade. This is a highly personal and intimate story of the Brigade, whose candour should convince even the not-so-sympathetic reader. Wintringham commanded the British Battalion at the Battle of the Jarama ; his detailed description of that action is a striking piece of cool but intensely moving realism. From it one sees how politically conscious democrats, whether ex-sergeants of the Scots Guards, ex-members of the I.R.A., veteran militant trade unionists, or American lumberjacks and mass-production workers, are the invincibles of modern war—which " calls for the sort of initiative that arises from democracy." " The whole shape and nature of modern war makes the people's army a better weapon than the totalitarian army," Wintringham concludes, using the experience of Spain to relate that conclusion to vital features of modern strategy and tactics—deep infiltration, elastic defence in depth and the supremacy of the machine-gun and machine-rifle.

GEORGE GARWOOD.

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A Critique of Critics

Soviet Policy and its Critics by J. R. Campbell. (Victor Gollancz Ltd. 8s. 6d.)

A POLICY IS to be criticised either for what it sets out to do or for its way of doing it. If we are in disagreement with its ultimate aim, the bigger its achievement the more we shall find to criticise in it. It is, therefore, not surprising that reaction in every sphere finds plenty to criticise in the policy of the Soviet Union. One does not expect wealthy coalowners, landlords, banking magnates or captains of industry to throw their caps in the air at each successive proof of the immense advantages which accrue to a people after these millstones round their necks have been removed. If the Soviet policy were carried out in this country, these gentlemen would stand to lose the £339,000,000 which now goes to them yearly in the form of economic rent and the £949,000,000 which they take in interest and profit. These are some of the facts that Campbell mentions and he points out that in the Soviet Union all this wealth is being made available for the Russian people.

To those who are in sympathy with the aims of the policy, however, criticism may take a different shape. Is the policy achieving what it set out to do? The Soviet Union aimed at socialising the means of production and at planning its economy not with the idea of getting profit for a minority but to meet the social needs of all. It is the only country in the world which has been untouched by the recurrent economic crises affecting all its capitalist neighbours and whose volume of production has been continuously on the upgrade; the only country which, with a rising standard of living, has solved the problem of unemployment. It is a country whose educational problem, as Campbell says, is comparable with that of the British Empire comprising, as it does, various backward peoples. The figure for illiteracy in the U.S.S.R. has already fallen to 8 per cent., while

> an honest survey of the British Empire would show that at least 50 per cent. are illiterate (p. 150).

It is a country where, as Stalin told Roy Howard, personal liberty is a real possibility because exploitation has been annihilated and no oppression of some people by others exists.

And yet in face of all these achievements we find sympathisers and socialists falling victims to the so-called "left" criticism. It is important to note the *source* of such criticisms in order to enable one to set a truer value on them; and it is precisely because on closer examination it will be found that in practically every case they emanate from Trotskyist circles that a reply to his effusions was necessary. As Campbell puts it:

> It is because Trotskyism is the source of all those streams of "criticism" which confuse and weaken the working class, that it is necessary to deal with it at some length (pp. 85-86).

Revolution Betrayed would probably be called Trotsky's "magnum opus" by his followers. Campbell shows that its "criticisms" boil down to a wail that, while the private owners of the means of production in the shape of industrialists and landlords have been eliminated, yet the level of technique is far below that of the leading capitalist countries. An investigation of the relative figures of production, which Campbell gives in Chapter III., affords sufficient proof that the backwardness in industry which the Soviet Union inherited from the Tsarist régime is being rapidly overcome.

Campbell's examination and exposure of the remaining Trotskyist contention against the possibility of building socialism in one country could

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not be bettered. He gives chapter and verse for the Leninist position that "the victory of Socialism is possible first in a few, or even in one single country"—Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. 5, p. 141. The Bolshevik Party has always recognised that until the proletarian revolution has taken place in other countries there is a danger of intervention by the capitalist powers. But the figures of production already referred to, as Campbell points out, while giving no guarantee that intervention will not take place make increasingly certain the power of the socialist régime to maintain itself against its enemies, and are reflected in increasing hesitation and successive postponement of the attack on the side of the capitalist camp. This in turn gives increasing time for the more slowly developing movements in the other countries to mature.

Campbell traces the evolution of Trotsky from the early days when he was

> opposing the building of a rigidly disciplined revolutionary party in Russia (p. 191).

right up to the time when the Moscow Trials show him as the organiser of "assassination, sabotage and treason." This development has at each stage followed the steps logical for one who never had a Bolshevik standpoint, who never had any faith in the working class, who only drew near to the Bolshevik Party when the international revolution seemed imminent and who, when that revolution suffered a setback, again drew away from it. In the light of this history it is not surprising that this Trotskyist "criticism" when

> it dispenses with those stirring Socialist phrases with which the public criticism is embellished (p. 42).

takes the form of action which leads to the position of the accused in the Trials.

At the same time Campbell deals with the various manifestations and arguments of Trotskyism and its disciples in the international field, especially in relation to the questions of collective security, the People's Front, and the experience of France and Spain. These chapters are of especial value for illuminating current controversies, and will assist those who may have been confused by arguments which, under a "left" dress, in fact only assist fascism and disorganise the front against fascism.

One of the biggest services rendered by this book is the careful and complete documentation and the fact that it gives in full the texts so often given in garbled versions in Trotskyist literature. Campbell's clear style and his wide knowledge of Marxist and Leninist theory make it an invaluable survey.

ELISABETH WILKINSON.

Science and Society

The Social Function of Science by J. D. Bernal, F.R.S. (Routledge. 12s. 6d.)

SOMEDAY PROFESSOR BERNAL'S biographer may record that this, his first full-length general book, was in many ways a summation of thought and inquiry that had been proceeding for at least twenty years. Certainly there are not a few passages in this encyclopedic survey (those on Leonardo da Vinci for example) which vividly recall youthful Cambridge conversations between Bernal and the present reviewer. It may be that this retrospective character of the work accounts to some extent for a detailed richness that almost overwhelms the ordinary reader.

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The book is divided into two parts. The first sketches the history of science, describes the present organisation and efficiency (or otherwise) of scientific research in Britain, analyses the teaching and application of science —indicating its frustration by monopoly capital—its historical and actual connection with war, concluding with a discussion of the international aspects of scientific work in which there is a telling comparison of science in the capitalist world and in the Soviet Union. Thus far we learn what is ; and the second part sets forth what might be. Here are argued the ways in which research and its finance could be reorganised, the changes that are necessary in scientific training, the revolutionising of scientific communication, how scientific advance could be planned. A brilliant chapter looks to the future and, while repudiating Utopian speculation, indicates some of the ways in which science could already be employed to transform the life of man and the satisfaction of his needs. In conclusion it is shown how the scientist can only be true to his science if he plays his part as worker and citizen in the current struggle for the transformation of society. Full appendices conveniently gather together statistical and other information of great value, notably a description of the organisation of science in the U.S.S.R.

This dual structure of the book inevitably leads to some repetition of arguments, made more noticeable by rather extensive cross-referencing ; and the documentation, alike in the length of quotations in the text, and in the mass of small-type notes gathered at the end of each chapter (a confusing practice) gives some effect of overweighting.

These criticisms of presentation do not detract from the importance of what by any standards is an outstanding book, already attracting wide attention in scientific circles. It would be superfluous in these pages to enlarge on the significant turning to Marxism in the past decade of scientists of Bernal's eminence. The fact that this major analysis of the problems of science, and their relationship to society, is done by a Marxist (and could only be done by a Marxist) requires no emphasis.

It is vital that a Marxist study of this kind should be careful to counter the tendency to idealise science as a revolutionary factor in itself and of itself. For the most part Bernal avoids this old error ; but it has some sort of hangover in certain formulations he employs. Thus at one point he speaks of " the new methods of production which science has brought into being " (p. 1), while elsewhere he correctly observes that " the fruits of the scientific studies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not, in fact, show themselves in technique . . . . until the time of the industrial revolution " (p. 21), and that the science of the eighteenth century " was from the start closely identified with the industrial revolution " (p. 24). New methods of production are the result of revolutionary social change, and thereafter of the rule of a given class, employing science as its instrument. That correct view needs to be firmly grasped, above all by Marxist scientists.

ALLEN HUTT.

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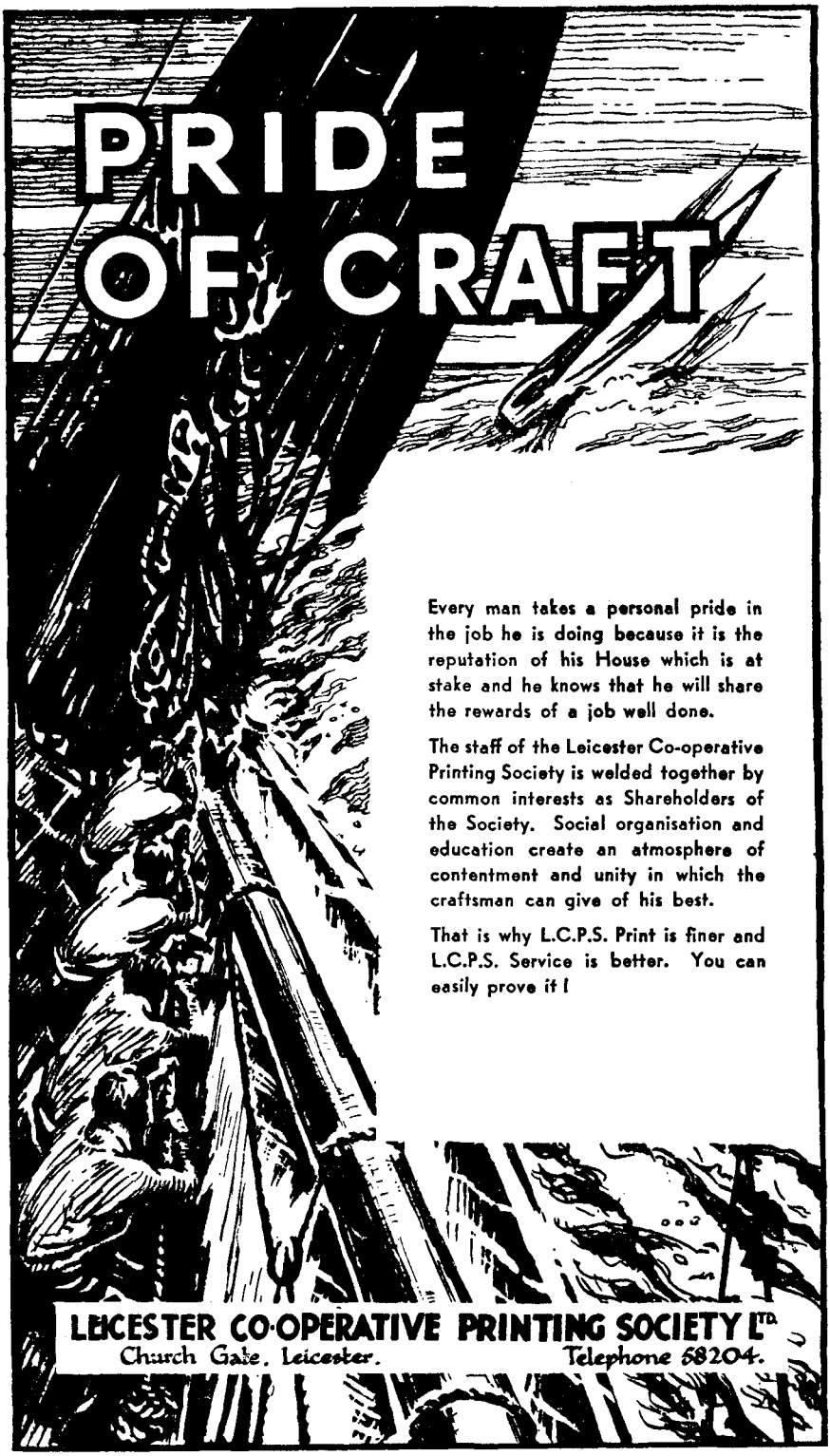
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